

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

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R E G I S.

WEEKLY

\$3.60
GST INCLUSIVE

SPIRIT - NSL FEE NOT PAID

Avory Says Its Lowy's Problem

By Brendon Davis

Northern Spirit have failed to pay their \$250,000 fee to Soccer Australia which despite an agreement to pay this in full by 30th June.

Following the change of ownership with Rangers selling out, the Spirit board had reached agreement with Soccer Australia allowing Spirit to defer the payment until 30th June 2003.

This infuriated many clubs with suggestions Spirit were able to use \$250,000 of Soccer Australias money to sustain the club through the season; with Soccer Australias money partially underwriting Spirits finals campaign.

A Soccer Australia spokesman told ABSW "SA can confirm that Northern Spirit have failed to meet their undertaking to pay the change of ownership fee by 30 June 2003.

NSL management will now refer this matter to the SA Board for adjudication and further action, however as we are anticipating a new interim Board post 19 July, it cannot be referred until after that point".

Several Clubs contacted by ABSW remain furious

with what they claim is the SA Boards failure to enforce the Boards rules, questioning the ability of the board to defer the payment in the first instance and now failing to take all appropriate steps to recover the debt, and possibly interest and costs from the Spirit.

Another club official who asked not to be named told ABSW "the SA Board members may be personally liable for the \$250,000 and any interest – and the board is not insured for Directors Liability. They have been weak, bloody weak".

Spirits President Antonio Gelonesi said he will pay the \$250,000 but not until some corporate issues are

resolved. He said the company (owning Northern Spirit) is being restructured so he needs to avoid having SA apply two \$250,000 fees for dual transfers of ownership. Gelonesi declined to be drawn on the like-ly timing of the payment.

He said "We've entered the shareholding (in Spirit) into a new company, we want assurances they won't hit us with another (\$250,000 fee)".

The SA spokesman confirmed a provisional draw has been made and circulated to clubs but "given it's a provisional draw it can be easily amended".

Under NSL rules non-financial clubs can play matches but are ineligible for premiership points.

Speaking exclusively to ABSW Gelonesi acknowledged the Spirit players are still owed wages from the 2002/03 season. He said the club had "struck a commercial arrangement with the players which is subject to Rangers reimbursing Spirits expenses".

● **NSL Transfer News and Rumours**
Read on Page 18



Northern Spirit Chairman
Antonio Gelonesi

Kewell Sees Red

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REPORTS

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Townsville to host NSL sides

by Joe Russo

The push to capture the sporting market in North Queensland is on in earnest. Rugby league has done it, so too has basketball, cricket will play one-day matches in Cairns against

Bangladesh shortly, and now it is soccer's turn.

Townsville is bracing itself for soccer in August when both Northern Spirit and Parramatta Power head to Queensland's north as part of their preparations for the upcoming season.

Townsville is already home to the Cowboys, the North Queensland rugby league team, but it the Razorbacks, the city's soccer team, that will hold the spotlight on two weekends in August.

Parramatta Power take on the North Queensland Razorbacks on

August 8 and Northern Spirit face them two weeks later on August 14.

Both games are Friday night fixtures, so as not to clash with the Cowboys' games, and will be held at Brolga Park, Murray.

(Continued on Page 3)

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F.L. Press P/L
1-9 Glebe Point Road,
Glebe. NSW. 2037**TELEPHONE**
(editorial and general enquiries)**Tel: (02) 9566 0500**

(all advertising enquiries)

John Economos**Tel: (02) 9744 6984****EMAIL**(editorial, advertising and general enquiries)
ABSW's EMAIL
absw007@hotmail.com
absw@foreignlanguage.com.au**FACSIMILE**
(editorial, advertising and
general enquiries)

(02) 9660 5736

MAILING ADDRESS
1-9 Glebe Point Road,
Glebe. NSW. 2037**EDITOR**
Mark Stavroulakis
STAFF WRITER**LAYOUT/TYPESETTER**

Mary Quarterly

PICTURE EDITOR

Carlos Furtado

CORRESPONDENTSAlan Clark (Victoria)
Allan Crisp (Adelaide)
Glenn Davis (Brisbane)
Otto Bader (Wollongong)
Richard Kreider (Perth)
Graham Cooke (Canberra)
Joe Russo (Sydney)
Roy Hay (Victoria)
Stuart Jones (Sydney)
Daniela Raco (Victoria)
Brendon Davis (Victoria)
Peter Damalas (Sydney)
Daniel Kuziow (Sydney)**SCANNING**

Chris Jiang

FILM PLANNING

Nick Philips

PHOTOGRAPHY**DISTRIBUTION NSW/ACT:**
F.L. Press P/L 1-9 Glebe Point Rd,
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F.L. Press P/L 72 Gipps Street,
Collingwood VIC 3066
Tel: (03) 9415 8588
Fax: (03) 9415 8944**QUEENSLAND:**
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aussiesabroad

BY DANIEL KUZIOW

Empoli midfielder Vince Grela has set his sights on another big Serie A campaign with his side, despite him sparking the interests of several European rivals.

The Aussie told his club's website: "Sure, it's flattering when you're mentioned in connection with many big clubs. But I am happy at Empoli and I'm prepared to stay here."

"The atmosphere inside the club is wonderful. I enjoy the city and the fans have always supported me. Here I am happy, and I repeat, I'm happy to wear the blue of Empoli next season."



Vince Grela: Keen to continue in the same vein as last season with his club Empoli.

AC Milan have been tracking Grela since Christmas, while Premiership clubs Middlesbrough and Aston Villa also know of the young Aussie's progress over the past year.

★ ★ ★

Kidderminster Harriers have handed a trial to defender Kevin Murphy.

Murphy, brother of Blades defender Shaun, joined the club midway through the season after impressing during a trial but was released by Sheffield United at the end of the season, after failing to earn a permanent stay at Bramall Lane.

He is now looking to remain in England and has been given the chance to impress at Aggborough.

"We haven't been able to get anyone else in yet, but I hope we will see some movement soon," said Kidderminster manager Ian Britton.

"It's a bit like moving house. We're stuck in a chain. I talk to clubs and players, but managers don't want to let players go unless they have a replacement."

★ ★ ★

Former Swindon Town striker Danny Invincible has joined SPL side Kilmarnock on their pre-season training camp in Italy.

The squad currently in Il Ciocco, preparing for the start of the new season has brought in the former Stallions player to trial with Jim Jefferies' side.

The 24-year-old turned down the offer of a new contact at Swindon and has been eyed by

several clubs, including Aberdeen, Crystal Palace and Wigan.

But Killie appear to be the Aussie star's choice and he could make the move on a free transfer if he impresses the Scottish outfit.

Jefferies told planetfootball.com: "I got a call asking if I would be interested. I'd seen him before and thought it would be a good idea to have a look at him."

"It also gives him a chance to find out about us because I know he has one or two clubs after him."

"It was all done at the last

loan because he is older than 24," Gradi told the club website.

"It looks like we'll sign him up for three months though and then see what happens after that."

"I want a fresh face to challenge Clayton because even though George (Bankole) is training really well, I am prepared to let him get out on loan."

★ ★ ★ ★

Aberdeen face competition from an unnamed Norwegian club for Australian striker David Zdrillic.

The Dons have stepped up their interest in Zdrillic after failing in a bid for Falkirk's Lee Miller.

Falkirk rejected Aberdeen's £175,000 offer for Miller and Dons boss Steve Paterson will now look at Zdrillic.

Paterson has offered the former Walsall man a trial at Pittodrie, but will have to wait for him to arrive as he is currently undergoing a stint with a mystery club in Norway.

"I want two strikers and a defensive midfield player," said Paterson to planetfootball.com

"Zdrillic is on trial with a club in Norway and will not be free until Monday. I have a couple of other strikers in mind but neither is in Scotland."

★ ★ ★ ★

Blackburn full-back Lucas Neill has agreed a contract extension to stay at the club until the summer of 2007.

The 25-year-old, who joined from Millwall for £1million in 2001, has established himself as one of the best full-backs in the Barclaycard Premiership and becomes the longest-contracted senior player at Rovers.

Blackburn manager Graeme Souness told the club's official website: "Lucas has been on excellent form since the day he arrived. He has established himself as a top Premiership defender and naturally I am delighted he has signed this long-term contract."

★ ★ ★ ★

David Aranzi has pledged to take his last chance of making the grade as a professional footballer by earning a permanent contract at Colchester.

The 23-year-old Australian winger paid his own air fare to join Colchester on trial, and aims to impress manager Phil Parkinson.

He told the official club website: "I don't see myself having another chance at professional football, this is pretty much my last chance, I will give it all I have got and hopefully I will make a name for myself here at Colchester United."

"I have paid my own way to come here but if I get in the side it is only a small price to pay. My agent knows Phil Parkinson quite well. He used to play with



Gillingham have handed trials to Australian duo Daniel Bateup and David Brickell.

The young midfield duo both play for Australian Soccer League side Northern Spirit and they have been recommended to Gills boss Andy Hessenthaler.

Hessenthaler will cast his eye over the pair in Wednesday's pre-season friendly with Folkestone before deciding whether or not to follow up his interest.

★ ★ ★ ★

PSV Eindhoven midfielder Lindsay Wilson will spend next season on-loan at newly-promoted FC Volendam.

The 24-year-old Australian joined the Eredivisie champions last summer on a five-year deal, but he is yet to make any impression at the Phillips Stadium.

He was plagued by injuries at the start of his career in Holland before failing to break out of the PSV A team after Christmas.

Volendam have offered another Australian a week-long trial. Scott Tunbridge, a 21-year-old striker who also holds a British passport, will spend next week training with the Eredivisie side.

★ ★ ★ ★

Peterborough United have agreed to cancel the contract of Steve Laurie by mutual consent.

Both the player and the club agreed that his first-team opportunities would be limited next term, and he will now be moving on.

The 20-year-old did not make a single appearance for Barry Fry's side last term, and only figured in the reserves.

Posh boss Barry Fry said that the Australian had been a model pro during his time at London Road, but would now be returning home to consider his next move.

"As far as I'm concerned he's been a model professional both on and off the field," Fry told the club website.

"He has conducted himself very well at London Road - it is unfortunate he wasn't given a chance."

"Whenever I was going to give Steve a chance in the first-team he was injured."



Danny Invincible: Has joined Kilmarnock for their pre-season training camp.



Lindsay Wilson: Has been loaned to newly promoted Dutch side FC Volendam.

Townsville to hosts NSL sides

(Continued from front page)

The bonus for Townsville is that both Parramatta Power and Northern Spirit will be in town several days earlier as part of their pre-season training program. Spirit are returning to Townsville after visiting there last season.

However, the association doesn't end there. It is rumoured that Northern Spirit may well play their home game against Brisbane Strikers in Townsville during next season.

Townsville is already home to a rugby league and a basketball team and according to

North Queensland's Soccer Federation President, Len Scott, it is start of an ambitious plan to base an NSL team in Townsville.

"We've got a rugby league team and basketball team here and I see no reason why we can't have a National Soccer League team here in the future," Scott told *The Townsville Bulletin* last week.

"We have over 4000 registered players in Townsville and no other code has got that participation rate. We have not approached anyone yet but I hope some of the corporate people can see the mileage

they can get out of this by supporting it," Scott is quoted as saying.



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Mr Andy Paschalidis, the well-known and respected Soccer commentator, in conjunction with Elite Sports Travel, have organised a 'Special Supporters' Tour' to Ireland and England, which will embrace three big England Premier League matches as well as the eagerly awaited battle by Frank Farina's Australian team against the Republic of Ireland on August 19 in Dublin. Elite Sports Travel earlier this year, organised a Special Premier League tour which included the historic match between England and Australia at Upton Park.

Last night Mr Andy Paschalidis informed ABSW that there is a very strong possibility tickets for the England vs Croatia for England vs Croatia match could be obtained for this tour.

Those fans fortunate enough to have attended this game are still celebrating that magnificent and unexpected 1-3 victory.

Elite Sports Travel now has packaged yet another Special Supporters' Tour that will combine 10 days in the U.K.

On arrival in London, the Touring Fans will head up to Birmingham in an Executive coach to watch Australian World Cup left flanker Stan Lazaridis in full action against Tottenham.

Three nights in Dublin is highlighted not only by the friendly International, (dare we suggest some good old fashioned Irish hospitality), but as well, the Golden opportunity of seeing one of the World's biggest rock bands - *Metallica* - who will be performing live at Linfield Park.

The Tour then wraps up back in England with a three-night stay in the ultra - fashionable suburb of Kensington.

Your Tour leader Andy Paschalidis will then escort you on a Stadium Tour of Chelsea's eye-catching home ground Stamford Bridge as well as to watch another Premier League Fixture, at this stage possibly Tottenham's home game against Leeds United.

The entire Tour costs \$4,550. I know where I'd rather be.

For additional information please refer to the adjacent advertisement.



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2003-2004 SEASON



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Monday 21st July
Monday 28th July



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** Minimum of 12 people required for tour **

SOCER HISTORY STATS

As it appeared on the Australian soccer website www.ozfootball.net/museum/, a list of six National League squads was shown with the coaches that have come and gone in previous years.

When a team is performing below par, it is the coach, not the players, who is usually blamed. Typically the coach will receive the blessing of the committee or board, before he is unceremoniously dumped, soon after.

There has been no crazier period in Australian soccer than the first two years of the National Soccer League - an amazing 54 coaching changes took place.

Sydney Olympic made the 54th Philips League coaching change when it replaced Joe Marston with John Xipolitas. Xipolitas, who played for Olympic when it was called Pan Hellenic, was the former coach of NSW State League club Marrickville Olympic. In a Soccer Action interview, Xipolitas said: "I am not a magician and I can't work miracles overnight, but I will try very hard to guide Sydney Olympic up the ladder."

He was Olympic's sixth coach since the league started. The others had been: Bruce Stowell, Kaz Kulak, Tom Anderson, George Gibson and Marston. Brisbane Lions and Heidelberg United were the only other clubs to have made six coaching appointments since the start of the league. Marston, who was the latest casualty in this cut-throat profession, was a former captain and coach of the national team. He represented Australia 35 times and coached the Socceroos in a 1-1 draw with AS Roma in 1966.

Despite Sydney Olympic's 6 coaching appointments in its first 2 years in the top flight of Australian soccer, it is the Melbourne Knights who hold the record for most coaching changes. Since admission to the National Soccer League in 1984, the Knights have had 31 coaching changes.

Not far behind are Sydney United, who have had 28 coaching changes in the same time frame as the Knights.

Below is the list of the top 6 teams with the most number of coaching changes. We have included coaches who had interim or short term coaching periods.



Harry Ngata has re-signed with the Kingz.

VIDUKA STILL A LEEDS PLAYER

On the day that Harry Kewell's transfer to Liverpool was made official, Leeds United has restated its position that Aussie striker Mark Viduka is off limits to potential buyers.

Leeds Chairman Professor John McKenzie was left fuming as Kewell's departure to Merseyside will net Leeds just £3million (\$A7.5million) - with another £2million (\$A5million) being paid to Kewell's agents - and was in no mood to debate Viduka's future.

"I have made it quite clear he is not for sale," McKenzie told Sky Sports. "On the last day of the season... I spoke to Mark Viduka myself at some length and we both agreed that his future was with Leeds United."

"I've had that reinforced in several

conversations with his professional advisors in Australia during the summer period."

Talk of the V-Bomber moving elsewhere with sides such as Italian side AS Roma leading the charge in signing the former Melbourne Knights star all fell through last week.

In a week which saw one Australian depart Elland Road, Viduka will again lead Peter Reid's squad up front where he hopes to score more goals to further impress his goal-scoring record in the English Premier League.

Viduka bagged 20 goals in last season's campaign but this year has set his sights to further that tally when Leeds take on Newcastle in their first outing in the Premier League on the 17th of August.

The club confirmed that other players have agreed terms and as soon as they have signed will be announced. Taking into account the signing of 3 more imports, it will mean that 16 players have committed to the Football Kingz.



Contrary to reports the Kingz will continue as a full-time football club. Based on a minimum wage of \$22,000 for a full time player, last year the Kingz had 18 full time professionals. This coming season the Kiwi side will have between 9 and 12 full-time and the balance part time players.

During the season, taking into account travel the Kingz will train 4-5 times a week. This season training will be held at night so as not to train in the heat of the day and also to enable the club to target some players who would not want to give up their careers. By training at night the club will actively encourage all players, full-time or otherwise, to either have a job or take up study to prepare for life after football.



Still a Leeds United Boy - Mark Viduka.

C L U B S

SYDNEY OLYMPIC

| No. | Start | End | Coaches Name |
|-----|--------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Apr-77 | May-77 | Bruce Stowell |
| 2 | Jun-77 | Sep-77 | Kaz Kulak |
| 3 | Mar-78 | May-78 | Tom Anderson |
| 4 | May-78 | Jul-78 | George Gibson |
| 5 | Jul-78 | Jul-79 | Joe Marston |
| 6 | Jul-79 | Sep-79 | John Xipolitas |
| 7 | Feb-81 | Jun-81 | Tommy Docherty |
| 8 | Jun-81 | Aug-82 | Doug Collins |
| 9 | Aug-82 | Sep-82 | Lubo Gojkovic |
| 10 | Mar-83 | Sep-83 | Tommy Docherty |
| 11 | Sep-83 | Oct-86 | Manfred Schaefer |
| 12 | Apr-87 | Apr-87 | David Ratcliffe |
| 13 | Apr-87 | Nov-89 | Eddie Thomson |
| 14 | Nov-89 | Apr-92 | Mick Hickman |
| 15 | Oct-92 | Jan-93 | Peter Raskopoulos |
| 16 | Jan-93 | Feb-94 | Berti Mariani |
| 17 | Feb-94 | Apr-94 | Tom Sermanni |
| 18 | Oct-94 | Feb-95 | Vince Estavillo |
| 19 | Feb-95 | Apr-95 | Geoff Harcombe |
| 20 | Oct-95 | Feb-97 | David Ratcliffe |
| 21 | Feb-97 | Apr-97 | David Mitchell |
| 22 | Oct-97 | Feb-98 | Geoff Harcombe |
| 23 | Feb-98 | Apr-98 | John Sentas |
| 24 | Oct-98 | May-01 | Branko Culina |
| 25 | Oct-01 | Feb-03 | Gary Phillips |
| 26 | Feb-03 | May-03 | Lee Sterrey |
| 27 | - | - | Peter Papanikitas |

ADELAIDE CITY

| No. | Start | End | Coaches Name |
|-----|--------|--------|----------------|
| 1 | Apr-77 | May-78 | Edmund Kreft |
| 2 | May-78 | Aug-78 | Les Scheinflug |
| 3 | Mar-79 | Sep-80 | Raleasic |
| 4 | Feb-81 | Apr-82 | Bob D'Ottavi |
| 5 | Apr-82 | Sep-82 | John Perin |
| 6 | Mar-83 | Oct-83 | Bobby Ferguson |
| 7 | Mar-84 | Aug-85 | Edmund Kreft |
| 8 | Mar-86 | May-95 | Zoran Matic |

SOUTH MELBOURNE

| No. | Start | End | Coaches Name |
|-----|--------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Apr-77 | Jul-77 | Manny Poulakakis |
| 2 | Jul-77 | Sep-77 | Con Xanthopoulos |
| 3 | Mar-78 | Jul-78 | Dave McLaren |
| 4 | Jul-78 | Apr-79 | Ted Smith |
| 5 | Jul-78 | Apr-79 | Dave McLaren |
| 6 | Apr-79 | Jul-79 | Duncan McKay |
| 7 | Jul-79 | May-82 | John Margaritis |
| 8 | May-82 | Jun-82 | Tommy Dochert |
| 9 | Jun-82 | Jul-82 | Mick Watson |
| 10 | Jul-82 | Sep-82 | Tommy Dochert |
| 11 | Mar-83 | Jun-83 | Raleasic |
| 12 | Jul-83 | Aug-85 | Len McKendry |
| 13 | Mar-86 | Sep-86 | John Margaritis |
| 14 | Mar-87 | Jul-89 | Brian Garvey |
| 15 | Nov-89 | Apr-92 | Ferenc Puskas |
| 16 | Oct-92 | Apr-94 | Jim Pyrgolios |
| 17 | Oct-94 | Apr-96 | Frank Arok |
| 18 | Apr-96 | May-00 | Angie Postecoglou |
| 19 | Oct-00 | Jun-01 | Mike Petersen |
| 20 | Oct-01 | Apr-02 | Eddie Krnecic |
| 21 | Sep-02 | Feb-03 | Danny Wright |
| 22 | Mar-03 | May-03 | Peter Tsolakis |
| 23 | May-03 | - | Stuart Munro |

MARCONI

| No. | Start | End | Coaches Name |
|-----|--------|--------|---------------------|
| 1 | Apr-77 | Aug-78 | Raleasic |
| 2 | Mar-79 | Sep-80 | Bob D'Ottavi |
| 3 | Feb-81 | Apr-82 | John Perin |
| 4 | Apr-82 | Sep-82 | Bobby Ferguson |
| 5 | Mar-83 | Oct-83 | Edmund Kreft |
| 6 | Mar-84 | Aug-85 | Zoran Matic |
| 7 | Mar-86 | May-95 | Domagoj Kapetanovic |
| 8 | Feb-82 | Sep-82 | Domagoj Kapetanovic |

KINGZ ANNOUNCE PLANS

The Football Kingz have announced the re-signings of Mark Beldham, Mark Burton, Jeff Campbell, Jeremy Christie, Mauro Donoso, Harry Ngata, Jason Rowley, Michael Utting and Darren Young for the new season.

The club confirmed that other players have agreed terms and as soon as they have signed will be announced. Taking into account the signing of 3 more imports, it will mean that 16 players have committed to the Football Kingz.

During the season, taking into account travel the Kingz will train 4-5 times a week. This season training will be held at night so as not to train in the heat of the day and also to enable the club to target some players who would not want to give up their careers. By training at night the club will actively encourage all players, full-time or otherwise, to either have a job or take up study to prepare for life after football.

FIJI CROWNED CHAMPIONS AT SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES

FIJI 2
NEW CALEDONIA 0

Fiji won the men's football gold medal last Saturday afternoon after beating New Caledonia in the final 2-0 at the National Stadium in Suva. Captain Esala Masi and cousin Manoa Masi were the heroes for Fiji, scoring both of the goals.

Manoa was on the end of a delightful cross by Esala in the first half to put Fiji up 1-0 at half-time. Then nearly twenty minutes into the second half, Esala clinched victory with a sensational 35 metre goal from a free kick on the left side which went around the wall and slid past the outstretched New Caledonia goal keeper Michel Hne.

New Caledonia never got into their attacking groove and were rattled both by

fierce defensive pressure from the Fijians, and the slippery conditions caused by heavy rain prior to kick-off which lasted twenty minutes and kept many spectators away from the game as a result. The final was also televised live on Fiji TV, but still a crowd of around 8 to 10,000 turned up to watch the match.

According to Competition Manager, Bob Kumar, who is also the Executive Secretary of the Fiji Football Association, the late rain forced away many people as there is limited covered seating available and the majority of spectators sat on the embankments.

It was hoped the match would attract a similar crowd to the 20,000 that had reportedly attended the

1979 South Pacific Games football final - the unofficial attendance record for the Games.

Fiji coach Tony Buesnel was understandably ecstatic afterwards and emotional scenes were seen from the spectators, players and officials alike. Buesnel expressed his delight at the victory capping of over a month of matches where the team improved and matured with each performance.

His New Caledonia counterpart was disappointed but happy his team made the final to gain respect.

The coach Serge Martinengo De Novack had led his team to upsets over Tahiti, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu en route to the final and came close to increasing his country's already bountiful medal tally at the Games. But the team which had played some attractive football in

the lead-up games was shut down by Fiji's physical and aerial superiority. The slippery underfoot conditions hampered New Caledonia's passing game while Fiji excelled with their speed on the flanks, utilising crosses and long balls to take advantage of their height. New Caledonia dangermen, Ramon Djamali and Michel Hmae were played out of the game as a result while the captain, Jean-Marc Case, had to work overtime in coordinating the last line of defence against the taller Fijians.

Another factor helping Fiji was the support they got from playing at home and in front of vocal supporters they rose to the occasion and dispelled the patchy form of late to finally bring everything together when it counted. The presence of Esala Masi - Fiji's

only player currently in Australia's National Soccer League - also proved crucial. His goal scoring exploits made him the co-leading goal scorer in the South Pacific Games with ten strikes matched only by the Solomon Islands marksman Commins Menapi whose team bowed out in the group rounds.

The Fiji Football Association also poured massive support into their team offering monetary incentives for the players after each victory which was a good gesture, albeit compensation, to the players who have devoted their time to being with the team and sacrificing other personal and family commitments. It was Fiji's second South Pacific Games title since the Games started in 1963. Fiji last won gold in 1991.



Esala Masi bagged one of Fiji's goals that led them to victory against the New Caledonians.

PAPANIKITAS READY FOR THE OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

By Peter Damalas

According to new Sydney Olympic coach Peter Papanikitas, the coming season represents an exciting challenge for all connected with the club.

While supporters are in the midst of a distressful off-season, where it seems each week is characterised by another star departure, the new coaching staff will be working on creating a competitive squad, one which can identify with the club and fans.

Papanikitas has no illusions about the size of the task at hand.

"It will be extremely difficult. We are starting from scratch with only two or three players remaining [from last season]. We will look to create a squad which has a combination of senior players and youth" he said.

The new coach mentioned that a number of ex-Olympic players may be drafted in, as well as four or five from Europe, including the Premier League.

Papanikitas has had a long association with the club, having coached at various levels for nearly twenty years. In his time at Olympic, he has taken everything from the juniors, to the academy and youth teams, and the odd first grade game during periods of coaching change.

"We will definitely give younger players a chance in first grade" he said.

"We have had fantastic youngsters at the club in the past. Look at the likes of Nick Rizzo, Leo and Nick Carle,

Bove, De Jesus, Kohler, Zorbas and Doumani. Unfortunately as a club we have not been patient enough to create a team for the future, and these players have never been given the chance."

Papanikitas will take the reigns at an important juncture in the history of the club. After a number of years in which the club have undergone a massive identity change with the move away from the heartland of supporters, the appointment of the long-serving coach symbolises a return to tradition.

Despite successive grand finals, and a championship under former player Gary Phillips, attendances at Toyota Park were dwindling, and this was seen

as a succinct message to the owners of the club.

The departure of chairman Nick Politis has paved the way for the members to resume control of the club.

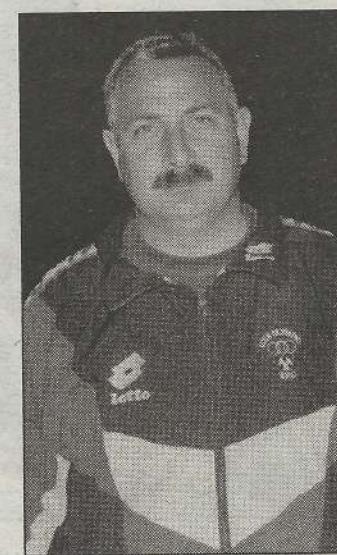
"The change that has occurred has given the club back to the members and the community. The amount of interest that we have received has been more than ever before and we are looking at a number of positives coming out of all this" Papanikitas said. While he has been signed for one season, the former youth boss will have a crucial role to play in the mid-term planning.

"There will be a change of structure in the club. The major problem is the funds, but hopefully we can convince a group of promising youngsters to come and play first grade. Our aim is to be competitive and to finish in the middle table. We will know more about where we stand after three or four rounds of competition" he said.

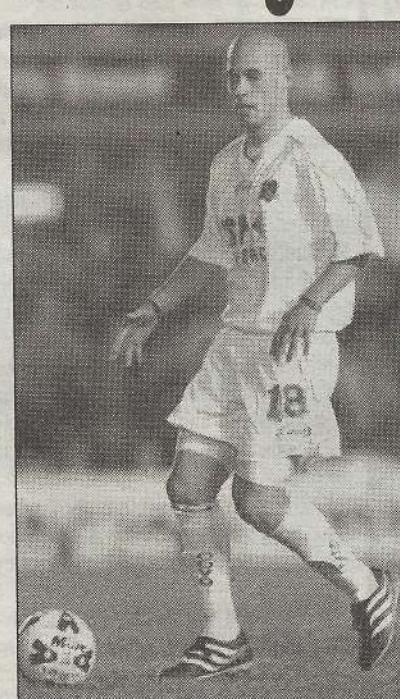
And as the coach begins his search for a new team, the search for a new home ground has also begun in earnest. Names such as Jubilee, Belmore and Leichhardt Ovals have been proposed, and the resolution of this issue remains at the top of the agenda.

Papanikitas stated that the priority for Olympic is to find "somewhere to call home."

And just for the record, Papanikitas' Assistant Coach was appointed last week and it is none other than former National League player Peter Papoythis.



Peter Papanikitas: Sydney Olympic's new coach.



Andy Vargas has returned to the Melbourne Knights once more.

Knights return for Vargas

New Melbourne Knights coach Ian Dobson has confirmed Andy Vargas will be re-signing for the club.

Vargas was released last year and has been playing with Dobson's Green Gully in the Victorian Premier League.

"He's agreed to come back," Dobson told the Herald-Sun.

"He's agreed terms and he'll come across when his Green Gully commitments are finished. He's really looking forward to going back."

Andy is re-signing with the club after he was told that the budget at the club would be slashed during season 2002/03.

The aggressive midfielder will once again reunite with his brother and defender Rodrigo.

On new signings, Dobson added, "We've had a number of players and agents contact us."

"It's a matter of working through things and see who's worth inviting down."

"But I want to give the young blokes here a chance to impress me first. I've had no chance to see anyone yet."

ONE KEWELL AGENT

Harry Kewell's agent Bernie Mandic admitted his company received \$5 million for the Socceroo's transfer from Leeds United to Liverpool.

Leeds chairman John McKenzie released a scathing statement about the protracted transfer which said the club was outraged at being forced to accept a "paltry" STG3 million (\$A7.4 million) for Kewell with another STG2 million (\$A5 million) going to his agents for brokering the deal.

McKenzie said the club was forced to drop its fee from STG7 million (\$A17.4 million) to prevent Kewell staying at Leeds and leaving the club for free under the Bosman ruling when his contract expired at the end of next season.

"Sadly STG2 million of the STG5 million had to go to Mr Mandic," McKenzie told Sky News. "The reality is, and I have this in writing and in a telephone conversation, that if we didn't settle on these terms there would be

a Bosman situation and they would not move until the end of the season."

Leeds announced to the stock exchange that Kewell's transfer had been complete but, in his statement, McKenzie said Liverpool had earlier agreed to STG7 million.

"The reality is that on Friday 4 July I agreed a deal of STG7 million with Liverpool Football Club, which Kewell and his agent refused to countenance," McKenzie said. "Instead they made a condition of not doing a Bosman that we pay STG2 million to Kewell's representatives, and Liverpool Football Club then reduced the fee to STG5 million."

Mandic admitted the money was paid to the management company MaxSport of which he is chief executive.

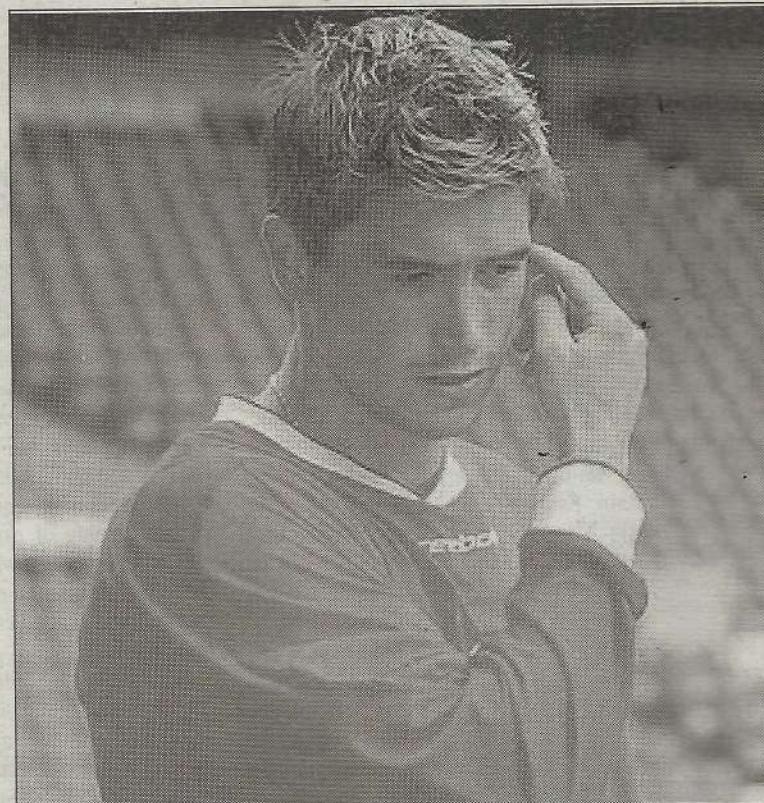
"He [McKenzie] gave a letter of authority to sell Harry Kewell for STG5 million. He gave a letter of authority that if he was sold for STG5 million that STG2 million would go to MaxSport," Mandic said. "Harry's

more than happy that MaxSport get what they want. Nothing has been done without the knowledge of the player or the club. Now Leeds want to cry foul. They signed off on the document."

Mandic said he personally did not receive the money and denied he was a director of MaxSport. Leeds was livid that it ended up receiving only STG1 million (\$A2.5 million) more than Kewell's agents for a player who was valued at STG11 million (\$A27 million) last year.

What angered McKenzie further was the fact the cash-strapped Leeds developed 24-year-old Kewell from a teenager and had him at Elland Road for nine years.

"Whilst I have no intention of entering a debate with those who seek to justify their own position in gaining large sums of money from Leeds United, I can say that I am angry and frustrated at the outrageous situation that has developed over the last week," McKenzie said.



Harry Kewell: Liverpool's new number seven

McKenzie made it clear that Australia striker Mark Viduka was not for sale after Kewell's transfer.

"I have made it quite clear he is not for sale. On the last day of the season ... I spoke to Mark Viduka myself at some length and we both agreed that his future was with Leeds United," McKenzie told Sky Sports television. "I've had that reinforced in several conversations with his professional advisors in Australia during the summer period."

Kewell announced on Channel Nine television in a pre-recorded interview that he had signed a five year deal with Liverpool - reported to be worth \$A150,000 a week - before the deal had been finalised.

"I've been speaking to them for over six months now and everything just seems right for me to go there," Kewell

told *A Current Affair*.

But Mandic said earlier reports that Kewell had been having secret talks with Liverpool for six months were "nonsense". He said Kewell's comments on *A Current Affair* were a "slip of the tongue". McKenzie said Kewell's admission that he had been speaking with Liverpool made it impossible for Leeds to keep him.

"So sadly the PLC felt it had no alternative but to accept the paltry sum," McKenzie said. "I believe that Kewell and Mandic have taken no account of the contribution Leeds has made to the player's development."

Mandic earlier denied Kewell was asking for a STG500,000 (\$A1.24 million) slice of the transfer fee as a loyalty payment for not requesting a transfer.

Brought to you by AAP

Kewell to lead 'Red revival'

LIVERPOOL's former Australian hero Craig Johnston says countryman Harry Kewell could be the man to lead the English Premier League club back to glory.

Kewell's controversial transfer from Leeds to Anfield was finalised today and Johnston said the bargain buy was the most important signing the club has made since 1977.

"This signing is as big as when Liverpool got Kenny Dalglish after Kevin Keegan left for the continent," said Johnston.

"I'd put Harry's signing on a par with that, and when Liverpool got John Barnes. Harry could be the man who leads Liverpool back to glory."

"The scousers will see Harry as something of a saviour. They need him right now. He's got electric feet. He's unpredictable and exciting."

"He can hold the wide position and hold the ball up. Liverpool fans will be punching the air. If he went to Arsenal, it wouldn't be like that so much."

"I have spoken to (Arsenal manager) Arsene Wenger about Harry. They love him, and they will be spewing they didn't get him."

Johnston grew up in Newcastle, NSW, and went on to become a major force for Liverpool in the 1980s, including scoring the winning goal in the 1986 FA Cup final against Everton.

He said Kewell and Liverpool are a good match and the move is much better for the 24-year-old personally than if he went to London or continental Europe.

"I see there are two sets of needs. Liverpool need someone like Harry Kewell. Harry needs somewhere like Liverpool," he told *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

"They will keep his feet on the ground. When a kid is 24, you're always a bit concerned by the bright lights of London."

"You see many stars come down from the north and get lost in those bright lights."

"And I've seen other great players go abroad and suffer from the cultural difficulties of Italy or Spain and the savagery of the press over there."

Johnston is also proud another Australian will grace the famous red shirt in the unique environment at Liverpool.

"I want to see Australia's greatest ever player show the world that Aussies are up

there with the best," he said.

"And I want to see Liverpool do well, too. Liverpool players will respect him for choosing them above Arsenal and Barcelona. He's a Red now."

"It's a way of life, a philosophy. You have the whole city and half the world behind you."

AAP



Craig Johnston: Former Australian great who donned the Liverpool jersey believes Kewell will spark a Reds revival.

Kewell denies \$5m cut

HARRY KEWELL denied he received a \$5 million kickback for transferring from Leeds United to Liverpool and is upset at accusations he stabbed his former club in the back.

Leeds chairman John McKenzie is furious that Kewell and his agent Bernie Mandic virtually held the club to ransom and forced it to sell the Socceroo for only \$12.5m.

While Mandic admitted his company received \$5m out of the deal, McKenzie also implied that Kewell received \$5m from Liverpool and said the 24-year-old had stabbed the club and its supporters in the back.

"No I didn't," Kewell replied when asked at a press conference at Liverpool today whether he received any money from Leeds.

When asked whether he received anything from Liverpool, he said: "No, just my contract."

He is disappointed McKenzie has made the accusation, and that the club he's been with for nine years had failed to offer him

a new contract.

"I've always said Leeds have been perfect for me," he said.

"For nine years they've supported me, I've got nothing against the fans and I hope they've got nothing against me."

"I'm sorry to say they never offered me a new contract. I'd been there for nine years and you expect to build a friendship with the club, but obviously there was no friendship there."

Kewell completed his five-year, \$150,000-a-week deal yesterday.

McKenzie said he had agreed to a \$17.5m deal with Liverpool last Friday, but Kewell and Mandic rejected the offer and demanded their cut otherwise the Socceroo would see out the one year left on his contract at Elland Road and leave the club for free under the Bosman ruling at the end of next season.

With debts of \$197.2m, Leeds had no choice but to cave in to their demands.

Liverpool then dropped their offer to \$12.5m, with McKenzie implying the other \$5m went to Kewell.

EXCLUSIVE

SA Director Slams Lowy & Media

In an exclusive for ABSW, current acting Soccer Australia chairman Les Avory answered some questions regarding the proposed takeover by Frank Lowy and Co and the media's involvement in regards to SA's recent actions.

Spiteful it may sound, Avory's words in the running of the game is highly evident in the following article.

"If I thought for a nanosecond, that any form of media in this Country would be interested in printing or speaking fact or truth, I might be keen to discuss Soccer matters with you. Unfortunately, as in war, both have long departed replaced by flames of ignorance and mass hysteria both of course fanned by the ASC's Mark Peters, the Government's media machine not forgetting its personal propaganda arm, SBS. Thank Goodness the reception is so bad hardly anyone watches Lazlo Urge."

With everyone caught up with the golden promise that surrounds the successful Mr Lowy we, the Director's of SA, sincerely hope he can deliver half of what this demanding sport expects of him, whatever that is of course, because at present, most do not know. I certainly do not.

Whatever he produces it is must be good right? Although, if he doesn't produce the goods I'm sure the media

will find a way to blame me and the current Board for it.

The highest office in Federal Government chose Mr Lowy's team, and so it shall be. But what a pigs ear they made of it. Their hostile takeover of this working class sport backfired; a public relations disaster from woe to go. With the heavy-handed ASC bankrupt of decency and legal nous, despite all the cash and resources at its disposal, it couldn't have handled Soccer worse.

The ASC's lack of propriety, respect and understanding of the Company's Articles (let alone it's Directors)

Corporations Act, just wouldn't have been tolerated in public life. Why the ASC spend all that money on American Consultants has got us beat though?

The same people did such a great job with US Soccer. They spent Billions of real dollars in designing a National League, and with 280 million people, and about 15 professionals in European leagues (Australia has about 140) all they can average is about 12,000 to a game. There's progress for you. Why didn't the ASC ask their mates in FIFA?

They would have told them how to redesign a Country's Administration for free.

The English FA certainly would have, they told me so.

Even the unsuspecting Minister for Sport Rod Kemp, who on May 23rd was warned that illegal corporate governance issues were being ignored and supported by his ASC, chose to ignore my advice. But at this point, lets go back a while. The whole thrust and reason for Crawford's report was Soccer's supposed lack of corporate governance procedures, yet here was a Government crying foul -

why? because SA Director's had applied them, and they didn't like it. It didn't suit their agenda. At no time have they offered to negotiate critical issues, get advice on them or discuss their initiatives with the Directors or stakeholders.

But lets move on. On April 9th, two days after welcoming Crawford's Report, the board advised the ASC that due process of Crawford's initiatives would take 3 months. Their response was unequivocal; adopt it in weeks or else! From this point onwards Crawford and Mr Lowy, constantly changed the goalposts. Even Crawford couldn't keep up.



Frank Lowy: Soccer Australia's next Chairman?

Australia it was, until recently, as precious. This award will shortly be surrendered to FIFA along with my suggestion that the next time Mr Blatter mentions his precious FIFA family, I trust he spares a thought for his sons and daughters in Oceania.

Whilst this may make interesting reading, current Directors are not expecting you to print it. With only 11 sleeps to go, we'd hate you to lose any, over an attack of ethics now.

If you can excuse the above sarcasm, (only valid when relevant) and in the

Matildas confirm Asian tour

The Matildas preparations for the Women's World Cup will include a three nations international tournament against Japan and South Korea later this month.

The Australian women will play South Korea on July 25 before clashing with tournament host Japan on July 27.

The two matches will be the first for the Matildas since qualifying in April for the Women's World Cup.

The 20-member touring party to Sendai City will be the same squad that will represent Australia at USA 2003.

National women's coach Adrian Santrac expressed his pleasure at the opportunity to put his charges through their paces against some quality opposition just two months ahead of the World Cup.

"This tournament is enormously significant," said Santrac in a statement. "Our squad has not played since the qualifiers in April, which is a long time. In terms of preparation for the World Cup, the importance can't be understated."

Santrac said during a media hook-up that his major focus to improve the Matildas' chances of success at the World Cup was in the area of physical preparation.

"We haven't, in the past, been physically prepared to compete with the best nations in the world. Our goal and our target has been to set a standard of playing that will be able to compete with the best nations in the world."

With a number of Australians playing their trade overseas, Santrac is unconcerned that some members of his squad are not regular first team starters.

"You'd much rather have players playing regularly but the experience and training of the four girls in WUSA (the women's professional league in the US) are getting is certainly worthwhile."

South Korea has qualified for the World Cup while Japan is locked in a play-off with Mexico for the final spot in the 16-team finals.

Japan's fate will be decided this weekend when it hosts the Central Americans in the second leg of the play-off. The first leg was drawn 2-2.

"South Korea have improved since the addition of other players, and obviously they are within the business end of their World Cup campaign, so it will be a good gauge of where we are," Santrac added.

"Japan appear to be in the box seat and will expect to qualify now they have the Mexico leg out of the way. But whether they qualify or not, they will certainly be a formidable opponent, further enabling us to test ourselves against a high quality side."

The 16 World Cup qualifiers are: Australia, Norway, Germany, Sweden, Russia, France, USA, Canada, Nigeria, Ghana, Brazil, Argentina, China, North Korea, South Korea, and either Japan or Mexico.

With everyone caught up with the golden promise that surrounds the successful Mr Lowy we, the Director's of SA, sincerely hope he can deliver half of what this demanding sport expects of him, whatever that is of course, because at present, most do not know. I certainly do not.

Whatever he produces it is must be good right? Although, if he doesn't produce the goods I'm sure the media will find a way to blame me and the current Board for it -Les Avory

Four months later we are all the wiser. Concessions have been granted, but at what expense. Everyone has been embarrassed, Lowy is still not elected into Office, Crawford's initiatives aren't implemented, and now cringing Government Officials are blaming me for FIFA's bastard act! Will someone tell these numbskulls that internal redesign had nothing to do with FIFA's decision, or is Australia the only Country in FIFA with organisational problems?

No way, because J Warren said as much. Rod mate, just look at the FIFA for goodness sake, now there's organisation for you.

But enough cynicism, lets get real. Whilst my Life Membership for close to 20 years service to Federation Soccer may not as valuable as an Order of

like you to spare a thought for the current Directors of SA, and what they've achieved in the last eight months since 'the corporates & accountant's deserted the good ship Soccer.'

They not only saved the Sport the indignity of Administration, and guaranteed the cost of the England game, they turned around the finances by \$6,000,000. (Ships rats reported to ASIC in November 02 that SA was in debt to \$4,500,000).

At this time, Director's not only underwrote this debt, and guaranteed revenue streams but proved Company solvency, signed major sponsorships and saved the efficient NNSWSF from oblivion, whilst forcing the Federal Government into allowing stakeholders to have a say on a new Constitution in lieu of the ASC model they were forced

hope that your heart is remotely close to this game, constant advice from the Northern Spirit Club advises SA that Club's negotiations with a past shareholder are at a very sensitive stage. SA is aware of what is going on and is closely monitoring the matter. I'd like to say 'for the good of the game', as it would be helpful to all parties if you could treat any report in the same way, but the maxim I once respected, no longer has meaning to me.

Mr Lowy's team will be handling this matter very shortly, and I'm sure you wouldn't want to prejudice him in the way me and my fellow Directors have been. I suggest he's a bit too big and political for you and the rest of the Sports media family to take on".

- Les Avory

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Wolves Offer Contracts

Head Coach John Turner is looking at the first weeks of sorting out quantity from quality in order to decide on players suitable for his squad in next season's NSL.

Contracts that have been offered to established performers from last season, Robert Stanton, Ben Blake and Dean Heffernan. The coach has viewed a critical

eye over trailing players, some have approached the club with exorbitant expectations and need to come down in their demands to be considered.

At present John Turner and assistant John Calleja are moving ahead nicely, always aware of the challenge ahead to create a new identity satisfying club and fans. It is not an easy task with plenty of obstacles to overcome.

Assistant coach John Calleja showed his ability in the NSW State League where he was noticed by John Turner as a capable operator, respected by players who joined him over the seasons. His enthusiasm is much appreciated by the head coach who trust his assistant to do the job at hand. He also knows a lot of State League players as possible prospects to be invited to trial with the Wolves.

Also local Illawarra players are screened at Premier League games and can expect an invitation to contact the Wolves Coach.

Eddie Continues Youth Talent Search

The Wolves youth squad is again being prepared for another great season. Eddie Tesoro is in charge for 2003/2004 season to continue his most rewarding work with several of the youngsters having been called up for last season's NSL squad while three of Eddie's players made the Australian Institute of Sports in Canberra and now have been called up to the National U/17's squad due to take part in the Youth World Championship next month in Finland.

Born in Liverpool England his first senior club was local team Tranmere Rovers where he played 15 games (three goals) in the 1971/72 Third Division.

He then moved on to Hartlepool United and played 55 games (ten goals) in one and a half seasons at the Fourth Division club before moving to the USA. He spent three years in the NASL, with Dallas Tornado (1974 - four games), Boston Minutemen (1974 - 16 games, eight goals), Toronto Metros-Croatia (1975 - 21 games, seven goals) and Hartford Bicentennials (1976 - 24 games, nine goals).

Between his stints at Toronto and Hartford he returned home to play four league games with Stockport County. He spent the 1976-77 NASL off-season at the New York Cosmos, where Pele was playing at the time.

He played for the Cosmos on a tour, but then opted to come to Australia to join Brisbane City who were just about to take part in the newly-established National Soccer League in 1977.

The midfielder was in the Brisbane City team

Their inclusion in a national selection proves the enormous talent pool available in Illawarra soccer developed by the enthusiastic work of the youth coach.

Eddie attended recently a clinic in Canberra to achieve his National Coaching Licence level 4 with accreditation to coach internationally. Several known NSL coaches took part in the 10 days course.

A total of 13 youth graders from last season's 16 are still eligible to play for the Wolves U/20's, three move up to senior ranks due to the age limit. Eddie Tesoro is looking at the club's very successful U/17's team - leading their competition at present - for additional squad members plus local youngsters like Michael Manley now with Shellharbour City Soccer club. There are several others from around the South Coast trailing with the Wolves.

Next April 2004 the Wolves Youth team has been re-invited for the FIFA approved youth tournament in France, running over 20 days with several 'friendlies' planned. The young Wolves done very well in this year's event, coming third. Well known European soccer clubs are entering again with their youth teams.

The Wolves soccer club and the name of the City of Wollongong have both been put on the map and made public in France and European soccer circles, known now among the European elite of soccer. Eddie and his boys are the proud soccer representatives of Illawarra soccer once more next April in Europe and deserve praise for their efforts and attitude on and off the field.



Robbie Stanton has been offered another contract by the Wollongong Wolves.

BIRTHDAY BOY

John Coyne

Born 18 July 1951

SOCCEROO CAREER

A-internationals [1979-1980] 4 games
Other internationals [1979] 4 games
Total internationals [1979-1980] 8 games

NSL CAREER

Brisbane City [1977-1980] 71 games (8 goals)
A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt [1980-1981] 29 games (2 goals)
Total NSL [1977-1981] 100 games (10 goals)

which won the inaugural NSL Cup in 1977, defeating Marconi on penalties.

With Brisbane City he gained another Cup medal after a 2-1 win over Adelaide City in the 1978 final. He moved to Apia Leichhardt part-way through the 1980 season, and stayed on with the Sydney club until the end of 1981. He then moved on to Western Australia where he joined state league club Forrestfield United, and settled in Perth.

With the Socceroos he embarked on a tour of eastern Asia in November-December 1979 - and he played in matches against Taiwan and a number of Chinese and Taiwanese provincial clubs. He also played twice against a tough Czechoslovakian national team in early 1980 and against Mexico later in the year.

He is the father of Chris - who was a 1995 Joey and has played with British clubs Southend, West Ham, Brentford, Dundee and Luton Town - and also Jamie who was part of the 2002/03 Perth Glory team.

Andrew Howe

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RESULTS 2002/03

PREMIER LEAGUE:

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|----------------------------|---|
| ADELAIDE CITY | 0 |
| ADELAIDE BLUE EAGLES | 3 |

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|-------------------------|---|
| ADELAIDE GALAXY | 6 |
| PLAYFORD PATRIOTS | 1 |

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| MODBURY | 1 |
| ENFIELD CITY | 2 |

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| OLYMPIC F.C. | 1 |
| METRO STARS. | 2 |

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|---------------------|---|
| RAIDERS | 4 |
| CROYDON KINGS | 4 |

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|---------------------------|---|
| WHITE CITY WARRIORS | 2 |
| PARA HILLS KNIGHTS | 1 |

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| P W D L GF GA GD PTS | |
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| RAIDERS 18 15 2 1 53 19 34 47 | |
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| WHITE CITY WARRIORS 18 8 3 7 31 23 8 27 | |
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| ADELAIDE BLUE EAGLES 18 8 3 7 18 22 -4 27 | |
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| ENFIELD CITY 18 7 4 7 31 32 -1 25 | |
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| ADELAIDE GALAXY 18 7 3 8 25 21 4 24 | |
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| ADELAIDE CITY 18 7 3 8 22 25 -3 24 | |
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| CROYDON KINGS 18 6 4 8 29 35 -6 22 | |
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| OLYMPIC F.C. 18 5 5 8 30 39 -9 20 | |
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| MODBURY 18 5 1 12 15 29 -14 16 | |
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| PARA HILLS KNIGHTS 18 4 2 12 24 36 -12 14 | |
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| PLAYFORD PATRIOTS 18 3 3 12 23 51 -28 12 | |
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STATE LEAGUE

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|------------------------|---|
| ADELAIDE HILLS | 4 |
| WESTERN STRIKERS | 1 |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| CAMPBELLTOWN CITY | 7 |
| SALISBURY UNITED | 1 |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| NORTHERN DEMONS | 2 |
| ADELAIDE COBRAS | 1 |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| PIRATES | 2 |
| CUMBERLAND UNITED | 0 |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| PORT PIRIE CITY | 0 |
| NOARLUNGA UNITED | 1 |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| SEAFORD PANTHERS | 1 |
| 2 | |

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| P W D L GF GA GD PTS | |
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| CAMPBELLTOWN CITY 18 14 3 1 61 12 49 45 | |
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|---|--|
| CUMBERLAND UNITED 18 13 3 2 41 13 28 42 | |
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| PIRATES 18 12 2 4 52 29 23 38 | |
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| NOARLUNGA UNITED 18 10 4 4 37 21 16 34 | |
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| PANTHERS 18 10 3 5 40 28 12 33 | |
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| NORTHERN DEMONS 18 7 3 8 42 41 1 24 | |
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| | |
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| ADELAIDE COBRAS 18 7 2 9 33 32 1 23 | |
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| ADELAIDE HILLS 17 5 5 7 29 30 -1 20 | |
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| WESTERN STRIKERS 18 3 5 10 25 37 -12 14 | |
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| SEAFORD 18 2 6 10 17 60 -43 12 | |
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| SALISBURY UNITED 18 2 3 13 20 54 -34 9 | |
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| PORT PIRIE CITY 17 1 3 13 25 65 -40 6 | |
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Victorian Premier League 2002/03

ROUND 20

Sun, 13 Jul, 3:00 PM

1 St Albans Saints SC Frankston Pines SC 0

(Vidakovic M)

2 Fawkner Blues SC 4 Port Melbourne Sharks SC 0

(Nwaogazi C, Recchia C, Deak A, Recchia M)

3 Altona Magic SC 0 Bulleen Zebras SC 0

(Trpcovski V)

4 Essendon Royals SC 0 Preston Lions SC 1

(Tricario J, Oularis A)

Sun, 13 Jul, 5:00 PM

2 Whittlesea Stallions SC 2 Altona East Phoenix SC 0

(Vassallo, B)

3 Green Gully Cavaliers SC 1 Bentleigh Greens SC 0

(Tricario J, Oularis A)

4 Preston Lions SC 20 13 4 3 36 19 43

5 Green Gully Cavaliers SC 20 12 5 3 40 13 41

6 Altona Magic SC 20 12 4 4 42 19 40

7 Whittlesea Stallions SC 20 11 2 7 31 27 35

8 Essendon Royals SC 20 10 4 6 25 23 34

9 Frankston Pines SC 20 9 5 6 40 29 32

10 St Albans Saints SC 20 9 3 8 23 23 30

11 Fawkner Blues SC 20 7 4 9 25 34 25

12 Bulleen Zebras SC 20 6 6 8 31 33 24

13 Bentleigh Greens SC 20 5 5 10 23 34 20

14 Altona East Phoenix SC 20 2 4 14 17 35 10

15 Port Melbourne Sharks SC 20 0 2 18 14 58 2

ROUND 21

Fri, 18 Jul, 8:15 PM

Port Melbourne Sharks SC vs. St Albans Saints SC

Sat, 19 Jul, 3:00 PM

Bentleigh Greens SC vs. Essendon Royals SC

Sun, 20 Jul, 3:00 PM

Altona East Phoenix SC vs. Altona Magic SC

Preston Lions SC vs. Whittlesea Stallions SC

Sun, 20 Jul, 6:00 PM

Green Gully Cavaliers SC vs. Frankston Pines SC

Mon, 21 Jul, 8:15 PM

Bulleen Zebras SC vs. Fawkner Blues SC





Queensland Lions Soccer Club

Phone: (07) 3271 3636 • Fax: (07) 3271 3804
 133 Pine Road, Richlands. QLD.
www.qldlions.com



Premier League Round 18

By Glenn Davis

IPSWICH FACING THE DROP?

By Glenn Davis

Ipswich Knights are hoping for a miracle to avoid a premier league relegation playoff after losing a crucial encounter 2-1 to Souths at Waverley Park on Saturday night.

After a scoreless first half, Souths won the arm wrestle which could have gone either way, according to Souths coach Peter Bannon.

Ipswich looked set to snatch a desperate three points when Wayne Adams put the Knights ahead before Souths rallied with goals from Keith Miller and Mark Riley.

Knights coach Andy Ogden conceded his side was in a dire situation sitting second last and now five points off third last placed Souths.

"We're in big trouble now," Ogden said.

"Had we won it still would have been a huge battle but now we're five points off Souths and we need them to lose matches and we've got to win."

Ogden's plight has been made harder by the side's inability to score.

"Not being able to score has cost us dearly all season," he said.

"This was the best we've played all year but we can't score."

"If they scored two then we should have scored six – that's how dominant we were."

"We've played well the last three games now and have only got one point –

against Taringa last week."

Bannon was jubilant with the result, which gives his side valuable breathing space with only five remaining matches.

Bannon has set his side a goal of reaching 22 points to avoid a play-off at the end of the season with the second placed first division side.

But Bannon is still wary of the closeness of the competition.

"Another win will give us 22 points, but I'm not sure now whether that will be enough to stay up," he said.

"The competition is very close this year and we're taking it week by week."

Ipswich also is relying on North Star and last placed The Gap slipping up in the remaining games despite the sides drawing 1-all.

The Gap looked set for an upset after leading 1-nil until North Star midfielder Brett Dellar grabbed the equaliser in injury time.

North Star Ken Swan had no doubt The Gap keeper Corey Baldock was the man of the match to save this visitors.

"Baldock was tremendous. He made some great saves to keep them in the match," Swan said.

"I was disappointed we didn't win but at the end of the day I was happy to walk away with a point."

The battle for semi-final positions also intensified after Palm Beach moved ahead of Rochedale with a thrilling 4-3 home win.

After going to the break 1-all follow-

ing a Peter Grierson goal and an own goal from Rochedale, Palm Beach dominated the second half setting up a 4-1 lead.

Alec Panic and a double from Russell Miner gave Palm Beach a big lead before two late goals from Rochedale set the match up for a thrilling finish in the dying stages.

"We were 4-1 up and cruising and suddenly we went to sleep and conceded two late goals," said Palm Beach coach Bobby Hamilton.

"We needed to win and we're still just outside the top four and the teams above us won't want to slip-up."

"We're hanging in there and we're still a chance. We played some good footy against Rochedale and deserved to be 4-1 up before we got the wake up call."

Brisbane City remain second with Taringa Rovers two points clear of fourth placed Pine Rivers after an enthralling 2-all away draw.

Taringa proved too classy for Wynnum winning 5-2 at Carmichael Park.

City coach Frank Pimblett was disappointed to share the points after a blatant foul on keeper Chris Nardozza led to the late equalizer from Pine Rivers.

"Chris went up and was pushed by Joel Hale and it should have been a free kick but the referee awarded the goal," Pimblett said.

"It was a bizarre decision."

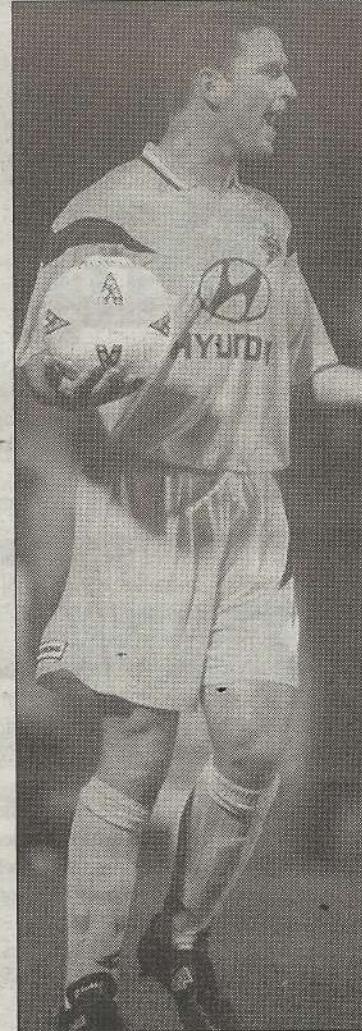
"We dominated for long periods and should have won."

"We got off to our normally slow start but I regard it as two points lost."

Brisbane City have been notorious slow starters and again conceded after only five minutes when Seb Thatchell scored for the home side in the slushy conditions.

Pine Rivers looked the hungrier of the two sides in the opening 20 minutes but couldn't profit on their dominance.

City got back to level terms on the half hour through Barry Wilkinson who slotted home a bobbling shot in the mud.



Peter Grierson bagged a goal for Palm Beach.

"Brisbane City played the better and hit the post once although we hit the crossbar off a free kick," he said.

Ogden's hope for divine intervention in the relegation battle arrived early for league leaders Queensland Lions who were trailing 2-1 with 30 minutes remaining when fog forced the game to be abandoned.

Toowoomba were well in control after going to the break 1-all.

However, soon after they hit the front in the second half the match was stopped for five minutes when fog rolled in blanketing the ground.

"The game stopped for five minutes and but then it came in again and neither linesman could see each other so it was stopped," said Lions coach Miron Bleiberg.

"To their credit Toowoomba controlled the game in the first half and could have been up for or five," Bleiberg said.

"When they got 2-1 in front they kept coming at us and didn't try to shut the game down."

Taringa's win was marred by three late send-offs which took away some of the gloss away from an inspirational performance after the visitors trailed 1-nil at half time.

Taringa coach John Ogden brought on striker Reza Aysen who scored arguably the fastest hat-trick ever in the premier league.

Aysen's hat-trick came in a five minute period when he took the field in the 55th minute.

The hattrick put Taringa ahead 3-1 win before Pablo Aviles made it four from the penalty spot while Luke Morley tucked home the fifth.

Taringa were leading 4-1 lead when Wynnum's Nick Seely was sent off after clashing with the official over the penalty decision.

Aviles and Wynnum's Brett Walsh also were given the marching late in the game following a scuffle.

Premier League 2003

As at Round 18

Premier League: North Star 1 (Own Goal) v Gap 1 (Yorozu), Palm Beach 4 (Miner 2, Grierson, Panic) d Rochedale 3 (Gordon, Urabe, Marshall), Toowoomba v Qld Lions (Match abandoned due to weather), Taringa 5 (Aysen 3, Aviles, Morley) d Wynnum 2 (Filewood, Noe), Souths 2 (Miller, Riley) d Ipswich Knights 1 (Adams), Pine Rivers 2 (Hale, Tatchell) v Brisbane City 2 (Serra, Wilkinson)

| | P | W | L | D | PTS |
|-----------------|----|----|----|---|-----|
| QLD LIONS | 16 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 38 |
| BRIS.CITY | 17 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 31 |
| TARINGA | 17 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 31 |
| PINE RIVERS | 17 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 29 |
| PALM BEACH | 17 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 26 |
| ROCHEDALE | 17 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 23 |
| TOOWOOMBA | 16 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 23 |
| WYNNUM | 17 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 22 |
| NORTH STAR | 17 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 19 |
| SOUTHS UTD | 17 | 6 | 10 | 1 | 19 |
| IPSWICH KNIGHTS | 17 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 14 |
| THE GAP | 17 | 2 | 12 | 3 | 9 |

Division 1: Uni Qld 1 d Mt Gravatt 0, Mitchelton 2 d Rocklea 1, Olympic 1 d Redlands 0, Peninsula 5 d Albany Creek 0, Beenleigh 4 d Newmarket 2, Easts 5 d Inala 1

ROUND 19 FIXTURES

Saturday July 19

THE GAP vs PALM BEACH SHARKS 7:00 PM
 ROCHEDALE ROV vs TWMBA RAIDERS 7:00 PM

WALTON BRIDGE RES.
 UNDERWOOD PARK

Sunday July 20

BRISBANE CITY vs NORTH STAR 3:00 PM
 IPSW KNIGHTS vs PINE RIVERS UTD 3:00 PM
 TARINGA ROVERS vs SOUTHS UTD 3:00 PM
 QUEENSLAND LIONS vs WYNNUM 4:00 PM

SPENCER PARK
 ERIC EVANS RESERVE
 JACK SPEARE PARK
 LIONS STADIUM

Letters to the Editor

TWO HORSE RACE

Dear Sir,

It certainly looks like next season's NSL will be another two horse race.

The demise of the Olympic Sharks has benefitted the only two clubs capable of mounting a consistent challenge throughout the season just passed, Perth Glory and Parramatta Power.

This is an alarming trend.

It seems that in today's football world, club officials no longer have the patience to build success, but instead prefer to plunder the best talent whenever and wherever it happens to pop up.

Take the current champions for example. With the youth system scrapped, the club is consistently forced to buy the best players when they are at top form to replace the ones that have departed.

And the quickfire success of Olympic has lead Parramatta down the primrose path, who have all but emulated their Sydney rivals by purchasing an entire midfield quartet, and perhaps the most dangerous striker in the country. Looking at the squad, and it surprises me that they are not an exact replica of the grand finalists!

Australian clubs should take heed of the hard times now encountered by Olympic, where the dollar bubble has well and truly burst!

Richard Jeffers.
North Sydney, NSW.

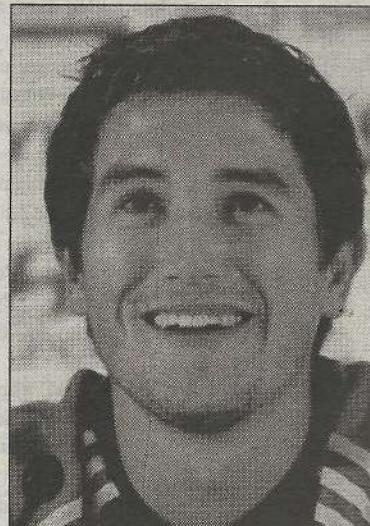
KEWELL THE JEWEL

Dear Sir,

Well Harry Kewell is off at last, and good luck to him!

He has the talent and the years to make an even bigger impression on the football world.

Sitting in a coffee shop with a few mates, we were compiling a list of the world's best strikers on a serviette.



Harry Kewell – the Australian Jewel!

When it comes to left footers, Harry rates amongst the elite.

In terms of long range shooting, Kewell is as effective as Adriano and Recoba (Roma and Arsenal can support this argument), his close skill and dribbling rivals Javier Saviola, he's as quick as Claudio Lopez, consistent like Raul and has the finishing touch of 'Aussie' Christian Vieri.

I should be a poet!

My only hope is that he does not get pushed out on the left wing while he is at Liverpool.

Emile Heskey and El Hadji Diouf have not really lived up to expectation at Anfield, and only Milan Baros can present

a case for Houllier to move Kewell into midfield.

He deserves to be given an extended run up front alongside fellow speedster Michael Owen.

Imagine that combination. Look out Premiership!

David McGloin.
Melbourne, VIC.

ABOUT TIME

Dear Sir,

I heard last week that the current board of Soccer Australia will be stepping down on July 19.

I for one will be holding my breath until such an event occurs, considering the recent flip-flops which have engulfed the sport at the international level.



It is time the sport utilises the immense business, administrative and marketing credentials of the figures proposed to take over the running of the game.

Lets be honest to ourselves. For years the Australian game at grass roots level (read NSL) has suffered from poor (read lack of) publicity, and a host of opportunities have been missed, the 2000 Olympic Games was the biggest example.

The ill-advised "Travellers versus the True Blues" concept accrued a total attendance of some two people back in the mid nineties, while grand finals in Perth have saved the season from total disaster.

True, the NSL will never reach the interest level of say the English Premier League, but it is about time the soccer community strive to create a competition that we can all be proud of.

Catherine Chambers.
Hornsby, NSW.

OCEANIA-ASIA = SUCCESS

Dear Sir,

For Oceania to be taken seriously in world footballing politics, it simply must come to an arrangement with Asia.

Geographically, economically and on the field, Asia represents the most logical progression for the region.

By playing regular fixtures on this continent, Australian national (and club) teams will gain necessary experience of diverse playing conditions and different quality of opponents. And hopefully the region will receive added financial bonuses as a legitimate confederation that is very much united with another confederation.

Success at the international level and at World Cups takes time to achieve, and even then, success may be fleeting. Saudi Arabia is the perfect example- after a sterling performance in the United States in 1994, it conceded eight goals against Germany a year ago.

Oceania chief Basil Scarsella, and all those people complaining about FIFA's decision should keep this in mind, and work out a way in which we can compete in meaningful events, such as the Asian Champions League and the various

national tournaments.

A World Cup handout will certainly not benefit the running of the sport in this region in the long run.

Peter Dwyer.
Brisbane, QLD.

about this previously, when there were articles on John Warren & Thommo.

Although there were some reference to their respective achievements it was not mentioned that they had been recognised by their own sport.

Ted Smith
Thornbury, VIC.

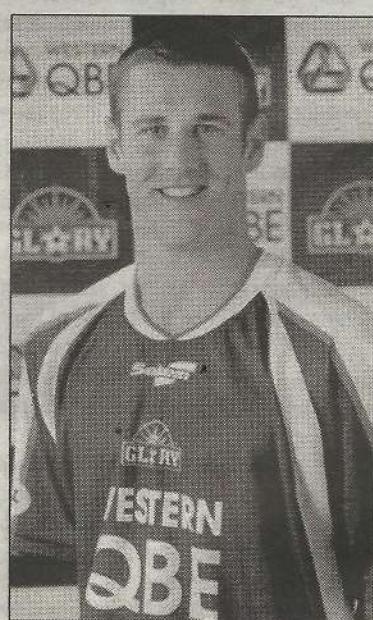
CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

Dear Sir,

Considering that the Socceroos will now have to play a country other than New Zealand to qualify for the next World Cup, national coaches Frank Farina and Ange Postecoglou should invest a great deal of their time and energy into finding and developing the Socceroo backline for the start of qualifiers.

While the national team have been served exceptionally well by the likes of Muscat, Moore, Popovic, Vidmar, Murphy and Lazaridis, it seems there is a dearth of naturally gifted central defenders both in Australia and abroad.

With the exception of Lucas Neill, I cannot think of anyone at this point who will lead Australia from the back up to and beyond 2006.



David Tarka: A future defender for the Socceroos?

Should Farina stick with the tried and tested formula, this area may be the key weakness.

When playing against a quicksilver Asian team such as South Korea, or a powerful South American country, a slow to react defence may be the final undoing of the Socceroos yet again. With what ease did Dario Silva get passed Shaun Murphy to score the first goal in the match in Montevideo.

Hayden Foxe, Alex Wilkinson and David Tarka are all good candidates, but their age and inexperience will surely rule them out of the crucial games.

Mark Lonsdale.
Perth, WA.

MORE OF IT

Dear Sir,

I read the James Master's article dated 1-7-03 with interest and as I'm sure you are aware that he was one of the first original inductees to the original Soccer Australia Hall of Fame. I believe that it might interest your readers to have a continuing series of some of the other inductees and would be happy to assist.

You may have seen the Webb Site that has a brief summary for each inductee, similar to the articles in the various books published at the time. I have thought

over there.

Dempsey should seriously take a good hard look at what he stated in the press. I was once a keen follower of his but after this - well, I guess it's hard to comprehend with someone that thinks Australian's are selfish.

As for the FIFA decision, I was upset and angry that we were two faced by Mr Smooth Operator Sepp Blatter however we have to get on with the job.

Now is the time we give the boys our full support!

Shawn Sampson,
Bondi, NSW.

CRESCENT SUCCESS

Dear Sir,

I've been a keen admirer of your paper in the past year and have been quite happy with the content its been giving to its readers.

Both the National League, NSW section and World Pages have been a good read but I was more then pleased to see a nice story on the Sydney Crescent Star a few weeks back.

The match report and a story on its star player Tanju Balabanal.

Apart from the local Turkish paper that comes out once a week no one has really given him or the club a plug.

The club is doing quite well at the moment both on and off the pitch.

From an estimate, the last game attracted around two-thousand people! Not bad for a NSW Winter Super League match.

Just wanted to say that I hope the coverage continues and to keep up the good work.

Yatzak Aslan,
Lidcombe, NSW.



Tanju Balabanal: Has taken the Winter Super League by storm with some scintillating performances.

SOCCKERWOMAN

BY JANENE MAR

QANTAS MATILDAS TO PLAY JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA WORLD CUP TEAM TO BE NAMED THIS WEEK

The Qantas Matildas will tour to Sendai City, Japan to play in the 3 Nations International Women's Soccer tournament against Japan and South Korea, 22 to 27 July 2003.

The two internationals will be the first for the Qantas Matildas since qualifying for the FIFA Women's World Cup - USA 2003 as winners of the Oceania Qualifying Tournament in April. The tour will also be the first hitout for the World Cup team itself, the 20-member team for USA 2003 to be announced this week and depart for Japan on 21 July.

National Women's Coach Adrian Santrac is pleased to be getting back on the park with only two months remaining before the World Cup.

"This tournament is enormously significant," said Santrac. "Our squad has not played since the Qualifiers in April, which is a long time. In terms of preparation for the World Cup, the importance can't be understated."

South Korea has burst through as one of the most improved teams in women's football, culminating in qualification for their first ever Women's World Cup less than three weeks ago. South Korea surprised all by claiming one of Asia's two direct qualification berths with a successful performance at the Asian Women's Championship. The South Koreans played in the last two Australia Cup tournaments (January 2002 and 2003), with the Qantas Matildas victorious in all four matches. However, it seems the Koreans may have been experimenting with their lineup, only half their Asian Championship team having played here on each occasion. Of their six matches to date against South Korea, Australia has one loss alongside five wins.

Japan is the team that made way for South Korea's new-found glory, having lost the crucial third-place playoff to the Koreans at the Asian Championship despite a solid performance.

However Japan have maintained their record of qualifying for every Women's World Cup, successfully coming through the home and away playoff with Mexico for the sixteenth and final berth to USA 2003 (see below). Japan's best World Cup showing to date was 8th place in 1995. The last encounter between Japan and Australia resulted in a 1-1 draw at the Tournoi International de France in April 2002. Australia are undefeated in a total of eight meetings against Japan, although six of these are draws.

"South Korea have now qualified, but from the Asian qualifiers, only eleven of their players were here for the Australia Cup," said Santrac. "South Korea have improved since the addition of other players, and obviously they are within the business end of their World Cup campaign, so it will be a good gauge of where we are."

"Japan appear to be in the box seat and will expect to qualify now they have the Mexico leg out of the way," said Santrac last week of the tournament host. "But whether they qualify or not, they will certainly be a formidable opponent, further enabling us to test ourselves against a high quality side."

Tournament Schedule -

- 22 July : South Korea v Japan
- 25 July : AUSTRALIA v South Korea
- 27 July : Japan v AUSTRALIA

JAPAN QUALIFY FOR WORLD CUP

Japan have qualified for this year's Women's World Cup after defeating Mexico 2-0 on Saturday at Tokyo's National Stadium. The win gave the Japanese a 4-2 aggregate score after a tight 2-2 draw the previous Saturday in Mexico City.

Japan suffered a scare by losing out to South Korea in the race for one of Asia's two direct berths, but successfully came through the playoffs to claim the sixteenth and last spot to USA 2003. Japan, a more technically proficient side than their Mexican opponents, have now maintained there impressive record of qualifying for every Women's World Cup.

This will be the first time ever that four Asian nations have played in the event, Japan joining Asian

champion North Korea, third-placed South Korea, and China who kept their automatic berth after losing the mantle of host nation.

For Mexico, their absence from the World Cup lineup will no doubt present a huge blow to the development of the sport in that country. Mexico first qualified for the Women's World Cup in 1999, after taking full advantage of their close proximity to the world's top women's soccer nation. A team of mainly American-based Mexican-born players, several of whom now play in the US professional league, took them all the way to the sport's pinnacle event. It was the catalyst for exciting growth in the game, evidenced by their continuing strong performances on the field and last week's sensational crowd of close to 100,000 at the Estadio Azteca. The Mexicans had finished third at the CONCACAF qualifiers several months ago, and it was a long wait to these playoffs, only to discover they were to face a much more formidable opponent than they had expected.

With so much at stake, both teams enjoyed good chances on goal before the crowd of 13,000 in sapping humid conditions, but the first half ended scoreless. Homare Sawa, Japan's leading light in the match, was unlucky on two occasions, whilst teammate Yayoi Kobayashi hit the crossbar with a freekick. Mexico had a header cleared off the goal-line.

Then eleven minutes after the break, Sawa gave the home side the welcome lead, striking with a close range header. Japan continued strongly before finally sealing the victory with four minutes remaining, Karina Maruyama on the end of a long ball from deep and angling the ball past the keeper.

WORLD CUP DRAW THIS WEEK

The Draw Ceremony for this year's FIFA Women's World Cup will be held on Thursday morning in Los Angeles (the wee hours of Friday morning Australian time). The eagerly awaited draw, originally to be held in May in China, will finally reveal each of the 16 teams' vital details - group, opponents, order of matches, match dates, and venues.

The Draw can be a major factor in a team's World Cup prospects.

The sixteen teams will be divided into four groups of four, each to be headed by a seeded team. USA, as hosts and defending champions, are already guaranteed to head Group A.

The Draw will be held at the Home Depot Center in Carson, Los Angeles, venue for the World Cup final. Players from the USA Team and other World Cup nations will be featured in the ceremony.

FIFA RANKINGS AND WEBSITE ALSO TO BE LAUNCHED

On Wednesday, the day prior to the (above) World Cup Draw, FIFA will hold a press conference to launch the first ever FIFA Women's World Rankings. The outcome of the current rankings will determine the three other seeds to head World Cup groups B, C and D, widely considered to be China, Germany, and Norway.

The FIFA women's rankings will then be published four times a year, providing an official yardstick for all women's football nations around the globe, and come ten years after the men's FIFA rankings were first established.

Also to be launched is the official FIFA Women's World Cup website to be accessible via FIFAWorldcup.com. It is expected to be a "ground-breaking" site including video archives from past Women's World Cups, history, player and team profiles, and venue outlines.

PNG WIN GOLD,

Papua New Guinea have won the gold medal at the South Pacific Games, with Guam taking out silver, and Tonga the bronze.

The seven nation women's football tournament was played in Fiji over eleven days. Papua New Guinea, although predicted to win gold after finishing third at the recent Oceania World Cup Qualifiers, did not have it all their way.

PNG unexpectedly lost to Tonga 3-1 and drew 2-2 with Vanuatu during the week, before bouncing back to score a vital 1-0 victory over Guam.

PREMIERSHIP BIZARRO

Nige and Derek here from BananaTV's Premiership Bizarro. We give you the news and views from all the stuff that happens on and off the pitch in the English Premier League.

All it took was a Lemon Ruski to come to town and BAMMM!! The whole football world goes bonkers again. Becks OBE 23 is now old news as, who'd have thought it, chairmen are flashing the cash again. This is what the off-season is about, plenty of transfers, plenty of players, making plenty of career-suffering moves.

Brett Emerton's name jumps to mind in the later context with his "Where did that come from?" move to bloody miserable Blackburn Rovers and bloody miserable and angry Graeme Souness. Better be careful here, as I wouldn't put it past Souness to make a special trip to Sydney to punch my lights out. Having said this, and obviously going out on a tenuous limb, what was Brett thinking?! This kid needs to learn some patience, he should have gone on holiday to somewhere with Costa in front of it and waited for Sir Uncle Bobby to call and turn him into a world-beater at the Toon. Too bad Brett, Euro Loser's Cup if you are lucky, by the end of next season.

Roman Ruski is about to make Becks, "Becks Who?" But what is Chelski's penchant for managers that can't speak a word of English? Hugely successful and popular, Real reject, Vinnie Del Bosque has claimed (through an interpreter) that Chelski have tapped him up. But this is Chelsea where,

after Frank Zola's departure, there are few who speak English. Maybe Vinnie will pick up the lingo a lot better than Claudia has. However, Roman Ruski is already putting his money where gobski is, buying West Hammered's promising right back Glen Johnson, for around 6 million quid. But there's more! On Rommy's shopping list is Christian Vieri for 21 mil, Edgar Davids for around 10 mil, and 100k per week for Patty Kluijvert will be small potatoes for the Red Oil Baron. But there's MORE! Just after tapping up Vinnie he's out tapping up Sven. Apparently Sneaky Sven Gory has had 3 sneaky meetings with the mysterious Russian and rumour is that he will be sniping at Sven again come October, after the Turkey clash. With Claudia's future assured during another meeting with Rommy, it seems that there could be 4 people picking this team come Xmas.

According to SkySports.com another gap has just been filled. After outing Peter Schmidel last month by the startling headline of "Schmidel's Gap Filled By Seaman", they are outing another footballer by claiming "Leeds Fill Kewell's Gap with Grey". Poor old 'Arry can't buy a break since his move to his fav team, Liverpudle. Titanic United are claiming that "Hurry Up 'Arry" has ripped them off, cost them 4 mil and stabbed them in the back. So, what is 4 mil in 54 mils worth of transfer activity and they are still in 80 million quids worth of debt.

Here's a good one. UEFA in all their wisdom have decided to spice up the UEFA

(Union of European Football Also-rans) Cup. What is this blinding stroke of genius? Have group stages like the European Champs and Runners-Up Cup.

BRILLIANT! Let's make the most of Europe - play more games. Having recognised that football might be played for the whole year in time to come, FIFA chief, Septic Bladder, has decided to stick his big schnoz into our game by suggesting a "cull" of the Premiership from 20 to 16 teams to avoid player burn out. How do you think the 4 teams should be culled Sepp??...By a club??!

Vicious Rumour: Yeovil City Council have voted to put more parking Police on the streets in a bid to be the 1st Past the Post 100 Grand Patty Kluijvert Raffle. Local residents are said to be parking in all the wrong areas so they should have the cash by the weekend. COME ON DOWN PATTY, THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

With all this transfer hot air being blown around, an interesting fact that since the Becks Blow Out, there have been 51 transfers for a total value of 4 million quid. This includes the 3 mil Djemba Djemba deal. It seems that loaners are still the best buy in town.

Footnote (which is exactly where Derek would like him to stay): pen pal Craig Bellamy has been up in front of the judge, for the alleged racial abuse whilst in Cardiff training for Wales' March Euro 2004 qualifier, at Jumpin' Jacks nite club. The 23-year-old idiot, of Jesmond Park Mews, Newcastle, was dressed in a dark suit and a

lilac tie as he stood in the dock before Cardiff magistrates to plead not guilty. He was given unconditional bail.

That wraps up another week of Bizarro in the Premiership. Don't forget to tune in to

www.bananatv.com every week for all the latest bollocks.

See you next week!

*Nige and Derek
Premiership Bizarro*

THE BLOCK SAYS

By Daniel Kuzlow

I may be the only one, but hands up or nod your head, who is sick of the god-damned Harry Kewell transfer saga?

While a player of genuine class and obvious talent, quite frankly his head plastered all over the news and his name reverberating from the many number of radio has long grown tiresome. Quite frankly his transfer to Liverpool was one that could not have come soon enough.

What many people appear to be forgetting is that unlike Leeds, Liver' have a team filled with international stars. They have their Owens', Gerrard's, Murphy's, Heskey's and to a lesser extent the Dudek's Hypia's and Baros'

At the Yorkshire club, Kewell was the superstar and for obvious reasons. Alan Smith couldn't play more than a handful of consecutive games before being shown his favourite shade of the rainbow, while the United midfield was so poorly driven by Erik Baake, Stephen McPhail and co., that you would forgive them for asking for

directions.

The Leeds defence was nothing short of second rate, and last season they let go of their two best defenders-one to arch rivals Man Utd and the other to the Magpies-is it any wonder they were left in a relegation dog-fight?

A move by Kewell was always on the cards, he even confessed this recently on ACA, indicating he had been in negotiations with 'a club' for some six months:

Yet the way such a move has been handled by all the parties involved will mean the reputation that he himself has forged on the field will be left in tatters. The news of stubborn player agents victimising clubs didn't do anything more than project an image of a money hungry player. And sadly this will hang around Kewell like a bad smell. Then what if he fails to perform at his next club-such a scenario cannot be good for our own golden boy.

I will conclude this ramble by saying this, if a move is necessary for a player, do it in a dignified and humble way and keep the best interests of the game and the player itself a heart.

NEWS FROM THE NATION'S CAPITAL

By Graham Cooke

One of the highlights of the Kanga Cup International Youth Tournament has been the support given by entries from the United States. This year 13 teams are taking part, continuing a tradition that extends back to the mid 1990s.

The organisation behind the annual venture is People to People, founded by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1956 and with the American head of state as their patron ever since.

Soccer is just one of the programs used to promote better understanding among different cultures, but it is a very important one.

Unfortunately, the structure employed does not make for great teams. People to People advertise nationally for young players to make the trip to the Kanga Cup. Those who accept travel first to New Zealand where they are introduced to each other, formed into squads and given some initial training, then it's straight on to Canberra.

Typical of the teams taking part are the Pirates in the boys' under-17 competition. Brandon Bacon from the state of Utah is playing alongside Justin Quenneville from Ohio. The pair met for the first time just over a week ago.

"I didn't know a single person on the team until we got to New Zealand," Quenneville said. "We're doing our best."

Bacon agreed. "The problem is that we all come from different parts of the country and have been taught varying styles, we really need a few weeks to get to know each other and mould together."

"But, you know, I believe we could be a really good side if we had the chance."

His words were born out by the Pirates' opening games, an 8-1 beating by Soccer NSW being followed by a more spirited 4-2 loss to Wagga Wagga.

One of the more heartwarming stories to come out of the Kanga Cup involves a team that aren't in the competition.

The Chung Hua Primary School from Taiwan

should have been. They entered and paid their fees, but the SARs epidemic was still raging when the cut-off date arrived and Soccer Canberra decided that invitations to teams from China and Taiwan had to be withdrawn and entry money refunded.

Four days later the SARs restrictions on Taiwan were lifted and Chung Hua decided to come to Canberra anyway, even if it was just for a holiday. When Soccer Canberra chief executive Alan Lee heard about it, he immediately arranged a friendly match with an ACT side as reward for their enthusiasm.

Now officials hope Chung Hua will be able to return next year as official entrants in the competition.

Belconnen Blue Devils midfielders Mike Katz and Nic Purdue are teaming up off the field, this time in the real estate industry.

They have both been hired as salesmen for Carmichael's, a local agency that has been open just six months.

To complete the soccer connection, veteran striker Tony Lemezina, now turning out for Capital City Suns in the ACT Premiership, is also on the staff.

Katz, who is playing in the winter months for Canberra Deakin, said he and Purdue had had talks with the Blue Devils' new coach, Chris Tansey.

"It's looking fairly promising - Chris has some good ideas and says he wants to build on the work done by [former coach] Lino Fiorese," he said.

"But he's not making up his mind about signings just yet, so we will have to wait and see."

Katz said Purdue, who is playing for Cooma in the Premiership, had decided to make real estate his career and had the ultimate ambition of opening his own agency "For my part, I want to put soccer first, at least for a few more years," he said.

"I really enjoy selling properties, but if I am signed by the Blue Devils that means three nights a week training plus one day of the weekend for games. I would have to see whether real estate could fit around that kind of commitment."

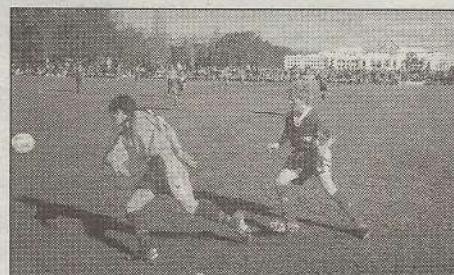
SIGHTS FROM THE KANGA CUP



Part of the crowd at the Kanga Cup opening Ceremony.



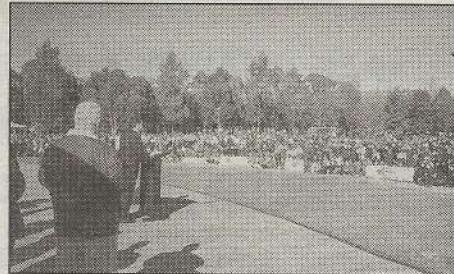
Well it is the Kanga Cup after all. A couple of Kangas celebrate.



For the first time football played within sight of old Parliament House. The ACT Under 15s beat Tenambic Sharks of Northern NSW 2-0.



James Blundell performs at the Opening Ceremony.



Soccer Canberra President Walter Valeri addresses the crowd at the Kanga Cup opening.



The teams line up for the opening match in the Kanga Cup ACT Under 15s v Tenambic Sharks of Northern NSW.



VICTORIAN CHRONICLES

by Brendan Davis

WORLD CHAMPION JOINS SOUTH

Eight times World Kick Boxing Champion, Stan (The Man) Longanidis joined South Melbourne on Friday night.

But opposition players shouldn't fear on field kicks from Stan the Man.

Opening the clubs annual ball and presentation night the now retired world champion pledged his support to South Melbourne telling supporters "I've loved this club for life - I'll do what ever I can to help you win more championships".

Longanidis, who is now a successful businessman in Melbourne, delighted the players with his presence, his inspirational address and humour during the night.



New South signing - Stan 'The Man' Longanidis.

COVENY - TOP MAN AT SOUTH



Vaughan Coveny shown receiving the player of the year award from South President Peter Mitrakas.

Vaughan Coveny won Souths Player of the Year award.

At a swish black tie affair held at South Yarras Darling Street Receptions, Coveny was emotional when announced as the winner of the prestigious award.

After being presented with the medal by club Chairman Panos Margaritis the Kiwi International spoke emotionally of his love of South Melbourne Soccer Club, the anguish he and all players felt missing out on the finals - then pledged South will

perform far better on the park next season.

The other major awards went to:
Best Clubman - Mehmet Durakovic
Rising Star - Vince Lia

SOUTH MUST WIN - MUNRO

Addressing Souths sponsors and players for the first time, new coach Stuart Munro told the club they must be "winners on and off the park".

South were one win away from 4th spot last season he said, but made it clear his ambitions far exceed fourth sport - "we will strive for success, we will strive for a



South Melbourne's new coach Stuart Munro.

South Melbourne Championship" said the new coach.

In a chaotic week for Munro he had taken charge of training for the first time only 48 hours earlier, he has spent enormous hours reviewing different players while also attending to the necessary sponsors and supporter functions.

His squad has already been strengthened with the return of Con Boutsianis and Michael Curcija with Bill Damianos and Susa both being offered contracts subject to fitness the squad is taking shape.

Munro will reveal his support staff over the next couple of weeks. Soon after he will reveal several other recruits as he strives for Souths 5th Championship.

MITRAKAS - SOUTHS POSITIVE FUTURE

Peter Mitrakas, the South Melbourne President told supporters that South was "looking to the future in a most positive way".

"There is a chance we will be the only founding member remaining in the NSL in 2003/04".

"All our players have been paid, all our dues have been paid and we've had success off the park, including making a significant reduction to our debt this year".

He said "the board has developed a five year plan, now we need success on the park".



A general shot of the South Melbourne awards night.

Green & Gold Army Series

Green & Gold Army

<http://www.ggarmy.com>

Welcome to the Green and gold Army's 'Socceroos', our newsletter updating you on the activities of Australia's national soccer supporters group. The following is a quick update on what the group is up to and any related news and chit-chat.

Aussies set for a real craic in Dublin-just 51 days to go

Unless you've been hiding under a rock, you know that the Socceroos are set to play Ireland at Lansdowne Road, Dublin on August 19. And all Australians, Socceroos and civilians alike, are looking to have a good old craic in Dublin.

Since blasting their way to the second round of last year's World Cup, the Irish have suffered some indifferent Euro 2004 qualifying form. The departure of Mick McCarthy and the stench of the Roy

Keane affair left them languishing with only 4 points from 4 matches before winning their last two back to back to remain in the hunt. It all sets the stage for another massive Australian friendly.

The Socceroos will be fresh and no doubt still walking tall after their 3-1 thrashing of you know who. Recent events at FIFA will leave our lads with a BIG point to prove. We have had several approaches from GGArmy members in Ireland and the UK

and we are looking at putting on some great functions surrounding the game-both home and away. We are also in negotiations with Soccer Australia and the Irish FA for ticket allocation for GGArmy members-stay tuned!

The GGArmy are currently talking with some key Melbourne and Sydney venues for another morning like the successful England game in February. Due to the time (4.30 am kick off Eastern Time) we are

looking at putting on a big Socceroos 'Movie Marathon' including some classic Socceroos fixtures of the past and a popular Soccer movie. Naturally it will be a huge night so book the annual leave now And we want similar events around the country-so if you are a non-Victorian member, email us with your ideas and help us make them a reality!

Who are the Green and Gold Army?

The GGArmy are a non-political group of soccer supporters with the sole aim of getting together and rallying support for our national soccer teams, from the Joeys through to the Young Socceroos, Olyroos, Young Matildas, Matildas and of course the Socceroos. We look to emulate some of the world's biggest football supporter groups including England Fans, Holland's Oranje Fans and the famous Tartan Army of Scotland.

The GGArmy are a not for profit organisation headquartered in Melbourne with the view of creating branches in each state and territory to allow fans of the green & gold to unite together when our teams play, home or away.

The GGArmy are ever evolving and to steal a line from the US Constitution, OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE. The GGArmy is always looking for new fans to join and strengthen the voice behind Australia's teams. You can join our Fans Only section of the website free by logging in your details on our home page.

The GGArmy exists to provide fans with dedicated seating block at Socceroos games (at home and where possible away). We also look to provide Australian Soccer fans with exciting events such as the successful live broadcast of the Socceroos v England match live on the Federation Square BIG SCREEN in Melbourne. Everything the GGArmy does is aimed at having fun, mobilising support for our teams and pushing forward the envelope for Australia's National program.

A quick note to anyone out there who registered on our old site – register again!

Unfortunately not all our data could be carried over to the new and improved site so feel free to log on and register again – it's the only way to go in the draw for an Adidas Socceroos shirt and receive updates on GGArmy activity

Come one, come all-and come often

How often do you check ggarmy.com? We suggest you book mark it and visit often as we update the latest Soccer news pertaining to Australian players & Australian national teams daily.

We also have regular columnist's gracing our site with the latest news, opinions and banter giving an Aussie slant on the world game.

Check out our own pieces including 'From the Communications Desk', 'Einstein on the wing' and a forum from you - the Aussie soccer fan in 'Tales from the outer'.

Add this to former Socceroo Robbie Slater's 'Robbie's Rant' as well as regular contributions from media icon Andy Pascalis, not to mention our soon to be launched fan forum and there's plenty to keep you coming back.

The GGArmy's inaugural fan of the month is Andre Krueger.

The German soccer fanatic has been the Socceroos most passionate fan since our sole World Cup appearance in his native land 29 years ago. Andre was one of the first to join the re-launched GGArmy and is itching to see our lads return to his country in 2006-read more about him on ggarmy.com

Win an official Adidas Socceroos jersey

Just by joining the GGArmy you are instantly in the running to win an official Adidas Socceroos jersey. As you know, we need absolutely everyone on board, so tell a friend-the more merrier. And now just by joining free, your friends, family or colleagues can go in the draw for a jersey -so spread the word.

If you complete our on-line member survey you increase your chances by 500%! The survey is looking to get your thoughts and ideas of the future size and shape of our membership packaging and structure.

Each member who completes and returns the form will receive 5 extra places in the draw. We will be drawing the prize on July 31 so get cracking and good luck!

OSMAN FREE TO PLAY AGAIN

FIFA has cleared the way for former Olyroo and NSL defender Levent Osman to resume his professional career after a traumatic five-month stay in the Romanian First Division.

On the basis of the PFA's submissions to FIFA, Osman's contract with his Romanian club was terminated and the 25-year-old was given FIFA's express permission to sign with the club of his choice.

Osman's claim for unpaid wages and damages has been referred to FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber, where the PFA achieved an historic win for South Melbourne midfielder Zeljko Susa late last year.

"It's been a tough few months for me," Osman said. "On field, things were going well but away from the game it was becoming a nightmare. It is impossible to keep going when the club refuses to pay you your wages."

"I really don't know how to thank the PFA for getting me out of the situation I was in. I feared for my own safety while I was there and

didn't know who I could trust."

Remaining unpaid for two months, Osman sought the



Levent Osman has been cleared to play once more after a traumatic five-month stay in the Romanian First Division.

PFA's assistance when his request for payment resulted in his demotion from the senior squad and warnings from club management.

"The Romanian federation is savage in their treatment of players who want to enforce their rights," said PFA General Counsel John Didulica, referring to the fact that former Romanian international goalkeeper Florin Prunea was suspended for nine months for bringing the violation of players' rights to public attention.

"It was important in dealing with Lev's case that we ensured, first and foremost, that his safety was not prejudiced. We needed to involve FIFA from the outset to ensure that the club and the Romanian federation were on notice that he could not be victimized in his employment simply because he wanted to enforce his most basic contractual rights."

It's worked out well for Lev because he has his free transfer and he will have an impartial chamber within which to pursue a claim for damages," Didulica added.

Leijer selected for Under-17 World Cup squad

by Roy Hay

Torquay teenager Adrian Leijer, who plays his soccer with the Victorian Institute of Sport, has been selected in the Australian Under-17 Joeys squad which will contest the World Cup in Finland next month.

Leijer cemented his spot with excellent performances in the qualifying competition and in the recent tour of Finland. This week Joeys coach Ange Postecoglou watched the VIS squad play Victorian Premier League side Whittlesea Stallions, eventually winning by four goals to one, and this confirmed his selection of Leijer and team-mate Kristian Sarkies.

Also in the squad is Melbourne Knights striker, Serkan Oksuz, who was previously a member of the VIS program.

Assistant coach at the VIS Aaron Healey said, "It would be difficult to find harder workers than Leijer and Sarkies. Their preparation and their effort is an inspiration to the younger members of the squad. For Leijer it is particularly impressive because he has the travelling (from Torquay to Melbourne) for training and matches and he

has to balance his school commitments. He did well when he got his chance in Finland."

The VIS squad is off to Brisbane for a three-match tour in which it will play against the Brisbane Strikers and the Queensland Academy of Sport.

In addition to the matches the careers education adviser from the VIS will take the youngsters through career planning issues and media relations, two critical areas in

the personal development of elite athletes today.

It is noticeable how articulate and presentable graduates of the VIS and AIS programs have become in recent years, making them ambassadors for their chosen sports and positive role models for those who seek to follow them.

Aaron Healey also remarked how much he appreciated seeing former VIS scholarship holders like Vince Grelle now establishing themselves on the world stage. It helped to show that the long hours of preparation and training had paid off for these graduates of the program.

Healey himself is a former VIS player, whose own career was interrupted by injury, but he has shown the value of his experience by becoming one of the top young coaches in Victoria as well as continuing to play the game at Premier League level with Frankston Pines.

BILL TURNER CUP & BILL TURNER TROPHY

(BOYS)

Round 3: St Dominics Penrith 2 Blaxland 0, Christ Catholic 9 Windsor 1, Concord 6 Canterbury Boys 1, Hurstville Boys 2 Marist Bros Penshurst 1, Pat Bros Fairfield 3 East Hills Boys 1, John Paul Coffs Harbour 7 Oraoro 0, Lithgow 2 Bathurst 1, Delroy 3 St Johns Dubbo 2, Parkes 6 Forbes 1, Xavier Albury 4 Galen College 2, St Michaels Wagga 4 Finley 0, Warrawong 5 Holy Spirit Bellambi 4.

Round 4: Narrabeen Sports 1-3 Epping Boys 1-2, Kingsgrove 3 Blakehurst 1, Armidale 6 Inverell 2, Byron Bay 2 Kingscliff 1, Trinity Lismore 3 Richmond River 0, Coffs Harbour 2 John Paul Coffs Harbour 1, Port Macquarie 3-3 St Clare Taree 3-1, Maitland Grossman 1 St Josephs Lochinvar 0, Kotara 1 Hunter Sports 0,

Lambton 3 Merewether 2, St Edwards Gosford 2 Terrigal 1, James Sheehan 4 Lithgow 1, Delroy 3 Parkes 0.

(GIRLS)

Round 3: Emmaus College 2 McCarthy Catholic 0, Doonside 1 Quakers Hill 0, Keira 1 Illawarra Sports 0, Bulli 7 Corrimal 1, Woonona 7 Holy Spirit Bellambi 1, Warrawong 6 Kanahooka 2, Albion Park 3 Oak Flats 1, Vincentia 5 Nowra 1.

Round 4: Davidson 2 Killarney Heights 1, Bossley Park 1-3 Picnic Point 1-1, Mullumbimby 3 Tweed River 0, Wauchope 1 Port Macquarie 0, Albion Park 4 Kiama 3, Vincentia 3 Ulladulla 0.

STRIKERS SQUAD BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE

Supporters and players might be thinking it has taken an eternity, but the Brisbane Strikers have begun to piece together their squad for the 2003/2004 NSL season.

And, in keeping with the club's limited pronouncements on the topic so far, it seems likely that the squad will have a decidedly Queensland flavour.

Enquiries to the Brisbane Strikers' General Manager, Ray Evans, revealed that 7 players have been signed to contracts, while a further eight have either been offered contracts and were still considering them, or were about to be offered contracts. In addition, a steadily growing pool of other players have contacted the club to offer their services.

The 7 players already contracted reflect an emphasis upon retaining the best young players brought

to the club during the reign of outgoing coach, John Kosmina. They are defenders Wayne Heath, Shane Stefanutto, Adam Webber and Daniel Dreger, midfielders Matthew McKay and Chris Scuderi and striker Joshua Rose.

That group of players has been made available to "guest" for the Capalaba Soccer Club this weekend in a fixture against the Victorian Institute of Sport - a fixture the Strikers had earlier pencilled in for themselves for their first pre-season exertions, but were forced to abandon due to having insufficient numbers of contracted players at this stage.

Evans said that other players from last season's squad who had been offered contracts, but had yet to sign, were goalkeeper Jason Kearton, defender Jon McKain, midfielders Peter Grierson and Stuart McLaren and leading goal

scorer Anthony Roche. Evans also said that contracts were ready to be offered to defender Stephen Laybutt and midfielder David Pilic as soon as those players returned from overseas.

A contract had also been offered to a young player from Cairns who impressed coaches at trials held by the Strikers in April. "We are also looking at other players", Evans said, "mainly younger ones in Queensland".

However, Evans did not rule out signing some established NSL players from other clubs, and said that the Strikers have "had many approaches" from such players, including some Queenslanders and players who had turned out for the club in the past.

"It's looking like we will have a squad with a good mixture of experience and youth", he said.

Evans also said that the choice

of which new players to bring to the club would be heavily influenced by the new coach, whose identity the club was still not in a position to announce.

"We had decided on a coach last week and had come to terms with him, but then he asked for a 3 year agreement, which we didn't think we could give due to the situation in Soccer Australia and the uncertainty over (the future composition of) the NSL", he said. "I think the coach understands and probably accepts that, but (Chairman) Clem Jones has had further meetings and talks and has some further things to report to us, but has not done so yet".

Meanwhile, the Strikers are awaiting a clearance from Soccer Australia before they can definitely confirm they will be playing home games at Perry Park next season.

"We're still negotiating with Soccer Australia over Perry Park", Evans said. "It has been inspected by them - in fact they were here with the NSL chairman (Remo Nogarotto), and we're awaiting a response from them. I think it's likely that they will come

back to us with an approval subject to conditions.

"The field has come on a ton", he continued. "There are still one or two rough patches, but I think it's improved a hell of a lot since we came in to the place".



Wayne Heath (Left) & Matthew McKay (Right) have both returned to the Strikers for next season.

Joeys feel financial squeeze



Australian Joeys coach Ange Postecoglou.

Australian soccer's uncertain future and finances have hit its youngest national team hardest in the lead-up to the world under 17 soccer championships in Finland next month.

Limited funding has meant little time together for Australia's under 17 team, with a planned two-week training camp in England the only chance for the Joeys to gel before the tournament starts on August 13.

Coach Ange Postecoglou described the Joeys' preparation leading up to the tournament as "embarrassing" compared with most of the other competing nations.

"We haven't really had enough time with the team without a doubt, but that's the state the game's in at the moment," Postecoglou said.

"We just try to be creative with the way we do things."

"We've managed to get at least two weeks' preparation before going to Finland."

"But the reality is this team has played only eight games together - pretty embarrassing compared to other countries."

Only one overseas-based player was named today in the 20-man Joeys squad - Southampton midfielder Matt Christensen.

The rest are based at NSL clubs, state soccer institutes or the Australian Institute of Sport.

Wollongong Wolves defender Jacob Timpano will captain the Joeys, who play Argentina in their opening game.

The Joeys have the tournament's toughest pool, with Argentina, Nigeria and Costa Rica all likely to test Australia's excellent under-17 titles record.

Australia's best effort at any soccer world championship came from the Joeys in New Zealand in 1999 - beaten in the final by Brazil in a penalty shootout.

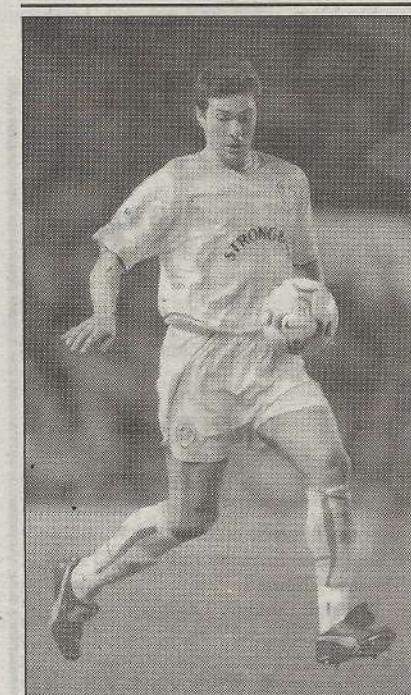
Postecoglou welcomed the tough competition at the group stage for his team, which will play its pool matches at Turku in south-west Finland.

"You want to play the best teams."

"It's no good going to world championships and getting an easy draw and kidding yourself about where you are."

"It's about finding the next (senior) Socceroo to come out and I'm more likely to find him playing against Argentina than weaker countries."

Australia will play warm-up matches in England against the United States under 17 side and Tottenham and Arsenal youth teams.



Paul Okon

Okon keen on Italy

Socceroos skipper Paul Okon says he is keen to return to play in Italy following a rocky debut season with Leeds United.

Okon had a successful run at Elland Road under Terry Venables but only made sporadic appearances under caretaker Peter Reid when Venables was dismissed.

Reid has since been appointed on a full-time basis by the club.

Okon has played in Italy with Fiorentina and Lazio and revealed he would be delighted to return to Serie A. "I don't know what will happen but hopefully things

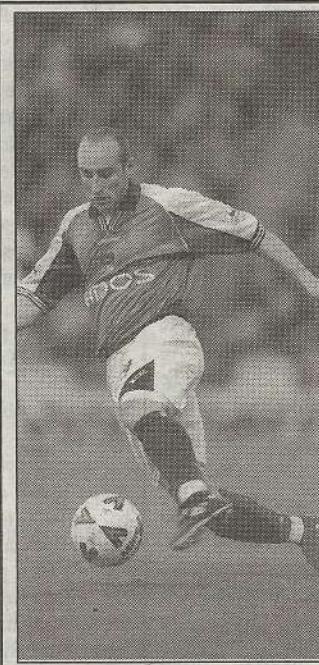
will be sorted out very soon," he said.

"I would love to go back to Italy and if I had the opportunity I would love to take it."

Okon led the Socceroos side to an upset 3-1 win over England at Upton Park last February.

At the moment, two Serie A clubs are chasing Okon who hopes to make a comeback to Italian football.

Player agent Leo Karis has confirmed that a couple of clubs are believed to be after Okon's signature but will know in a few days time what the future holds for the former Stallions star.



Danny Tiatto: Has cut his Melbourne holiday short and returned to England for training.

Tiatto back in training

Socceroo Danny Tiatto has cut short an Australian holiday to return to Manchester City after doctors gave him the all-clear to return to training early from a stomach injury.

Tiatto, 30, was in Melbourne when doctors gave him the news and he left for the English Premiership club almost immediately.

Tiatto, an aggressive midfielder, had played only 13 matches last season before suffering the injury on Boxing Day.

He did not play again until the final reserve game of the season in May.

"I got the all clear before I played the reserve game and then had to see a couple of specialists

when I was in Australia," he told the Manchester City website.

"They confirmed that the injury had completely cleared up."

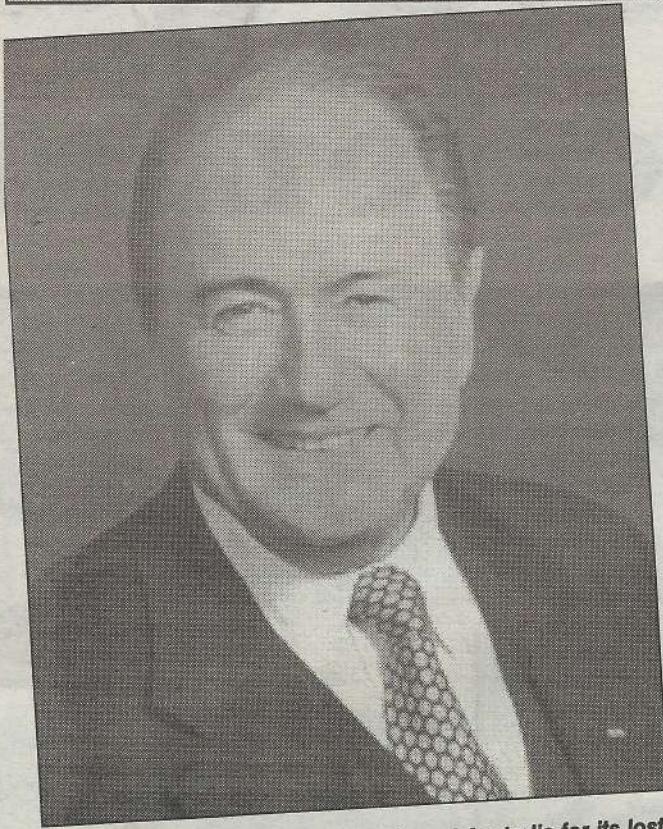
"I have been in training with the physio at Carrington for a few days already building up my fitness levels by running and endurance work mostly."

"I am ready to fly now and know that this pre-season is an important one for me after the frustrations of last season."

"Now I want to get as many games as possible under my belt before the big kick off."

"I have the hunger and desire to get back into the squad and would like to play in four or five matches during pre-season and get myself back into the frame."

Blatter Blames Australia



FIFA President Sepp Blatter has blamed Australia for its lost direct entry in the next World Cup.

PANOPoulos GOES SAMBA

Brazil's Fluminense have handed trials to South Melbourne midfielder Steve Panopoulos.

Panopoulos is out of contract and spending the off-season in Brazil with his wife's family. Fluminense have given him a three-week trial and he told the *Herald-Sun*, "It's early days, but if they ended up offering me a contract, it would be great."

"If it happens, I'd be rapt. The only thing I can go by here so far is the way they have accepted me".

New South Melbourne coach Stuart Munro has been busily preparing for the new season and has indicated his interest in attaining the services of 'Pana' for the new year.

His services to the club are on the cards as stated by

Munro who hopes to fair Panopoulos in his plans this year.

If nothing eventuates with the Brazilian club then South Melbourne will be the more likely destination for the skilled midfielder.

At this point in time, Fluminense are on a break, which could make it that touch



Steve Panopoulos is currently trying his luck with Brazilian giants Fluminense.

OFC STRENGTHENS TIES WITH ASIA

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC) announced a series of measures aimed at strengthening ties between the two bodies.

Following a meeting in Paris, France on 26 June to confirm the current partnership between the two Confederations, a plan focusing mainly on Competitions and Development to provide a greater competitive platform for the OFC has been set out.

The two parties agreed in principle that three Under-14 teams from the OFC would be invited to take place in the AFC's annual Under-14 Festival of Football, commencing in 2004.

In addition, clubs from the OFC will also be invited to participate in AFC club compe-

titions in the future. A study will be undertaken this year to determine how best to put this into practice.

The AFC have also agreed to extend their Coach Education program to the Oceania governing body, and will send personnel to assist the OFC in establishing their own Coach Education Program.

Present at the meeting from the AFC were AFC President, Mohamed bin Hammam, and General Secretary, Dato Peter Velappan. The OFC delegation included President, Basil Scarsella, OFC Senior Vice President, Tautulu Roebeck, and OFC General Secretary, Josephine King.

The next meeting between the two Confederations is scheduled to take place in Kuala Lumpur in December 2003.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has made it clear Australia must accept much of the blame for Oceania's failure to receive direct entry to the 2006 World Cup.

In a letter just received by all federations in the region, Blatter spelt out the specific reasons why FIFA reversed last December's decision to give Oceania a place in the 32-team competition.

While Blatter said "several factors have been taken into account without one being pre-dominant," the world soccer chief outlined that Australia largely had itself to blame.

"New Zealand's weak performance at the FIFA Confederations Cup France 2003, Australia's irreverent attitude to the OFC Nations Cup final, recurrent problems in the organisation and administration of the most prominent national association (Australia) in your region etc," Blatter offered for FIFA's stunning turnaround.

FIFA had previously indicated Soccer Australia's questionable governance played its part, Blatter

adding in the letter that Australia's indifference towards last July's Nations Cup had also been a factor.

Australia sent a third-string squad to the event and paid the price accordingly — almost losing to minnows Tahiti in the semi-final before going down to the New Zealand 1-0 in the final.

But Soccer Australia hit back angrily, claiming FIFA's reasons were just a front.

"OFC President Basil Scarsella has already denounced this decision by FIFA as immoral and unethical," acting SA chairman Les Avory said.

"Others, including me, have correctly labelled FIFA's decision as the biggest act of bastardry sport has ever seen."

"Now the FIFA president has the temerity to again blame it on New Zealand's poor performance in the Confederations Cup and developments within Soccer Australia, when everyone knows the real reason."

The "real reason" he said was FIFA wanting to appease the powerful South American confederation by giving them back an extra

half a qualifying spot.

In December, Oceania was awarded that half spot to go with the half they already had, giving them automatic qualification to the 2006 World Cup.

Blatter made it clear that FIFA had done much for the region and expected Oceania to continue to modernise the confederation's structure with "unfailing commitment".

He gave no indication of what World Cup qualifying path Oceania could now expect, saying the FIFA executive committee would seek the "optimum solution" and that the OFC should discuss the issue at the July 19 meeting.

The meeting was moved forward from July 26 and is now on the same day as the Soccer Australia meeting in which high profile businessman Frank Lowy is expected to take over as chairman in Sydney.

Scarsella said he'd received no indication that the knives would be out for him during the meeting, despite his failure to pick FIFA's change of heart.

BOSNICH SAGA CONTINUES

Suspended Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich last week lost four of his five appeals against the sanctions handed out to him by Chelsea.

The findings, from a three-man English Premier League panel, are the latest in a lengthy process of hearings and legal wranglings involving Bosnich's sacking by Chelsea after he failed a drugs test.

The 31-year-old is challenging the English Premiership side's decision to fine him over the incident, claiming his drink was spiked with cocaine by an unnamed woman in a club.



Mark Bosnich lost four of his five appeals sanctioned against him by Chelsea.

SOCER AUSTRALIA RESPONDS TO FIFA

Soccer Australia last week responded to the FIFA President, following Mr Blatter's letter of explanation to the OFC of the factors behind FIFA's about face in revoking the resolution to permit Oceania direct entry into the 2006 World Cup, a decision which handed the South American confederation (CONMEBOL) additional representation.

Acting Chairman of Soccer Australia, Les Avory said, "OFC President Basil Scarsella has already denounced this decision by FIFA as immoral and unethical. Others, including me, have correctly labelled FIFA's decision as the biggest act of bastardry sport has ever seen. Now the FIFA President has the temerity to again blame it on New Zealand's poor performance in the Confederations Cup and developments within Soccer Australia, when everyone knows the real reason."

"The FIFA Executive, who represent FIFA's confederations, agreed with South America's wishes to increased representation, because they knew their representative numbers would be attacked next by CONMEBOL, if OFC direct entry was protected."

As the smallest FIFA confederation in terms of numbers, we were the weakest political link and easiest target. It's as simple as that," said Mr Avory.



"What Oceania should be concentrating on now is examining the next best qualifying option for the 2006 World Cup. In Australia, we should have an attack of manhood, stop cannibalising each other looking for blame and assist the OFC in its proposal to the FIFA."

Mr Avory went on to say, "Around the beginning of the year, the Federal Government visited FIFA advising them of their role in the future of Australian Soccer. FIFA's letter to me on May 28th 2003

acknowledged this role, which makes a mockery of their claim that 'recurrent organisation and administration problems' were a factor in the Paris decision."

"With the sport under Remo Nogarotto's Chairmanship, we made productive headway very quickly. Administrative holes, as the current balance sheet confirms, had been plugged, much to the annoyance I suspect, of Crawford and the Australian Sports Commission. At last here were a group of Directors that were getting some important runs on the board."

"If the reasons in FIFA's letter are the case, then perhaps previous SA office holders Mark Peters and the ASC may wish to reflect on their performance, instead of the soccer stakeholders and Director's that they've constantly blamed," said Mr Avory.



His initial appeal against his sacking from his £42,000 (\$103,300)-pound-a-week job at Stamford Bridge was rejected by the Football League appeals committee on June 13.

He still has three months of a nine-month suspension handed down by the Football Association left to serve.

His appeal against the ban is still being considered.

Both sides have been given a week to appeal today's rulings.

The former Manchester United keeper was only handed a nine month ban instead of a maximum two years so that he could be back playing in time for the start of the new Premiership season, providing that is he can find a new home for his talents.

His 1999 move from Aston Villa to Old Trafford was earned on his outstanding form for the Birmingham side, but a bust-up at a lap dancing club and injury forced United manager Alex Ferguson to sign French keeper Fabien Barthez.

The former Sydney Croatia star's time at Chelsea was marred by injury and he was kept out of first-team football by Carlo Cudicini.

He was treated for clinical depression before the positive test for cocaine.

2003 NSW S

Action and



Super League d Drama



Images By
Carlos Furtado

from the dressing sheds

by Mark Stavroulakis

KEWELL – LIVERPOOL'S NEW JEWEL

What a week it was for our very own Harry Kewell.

The former Leeds United star parted company with his old team-mates at Elland Road and signed a lucrative deal with English star club Liverpool.

Being the favourite team of this editor, Kewell could possibly lead a new revival for the club who have lacked that 'big time' player in previous seasons.

Former Australian star and Liverpool great Craig Johnston stated that Kewell will lead a new revival for the English club.

Away from Kewell, the transfer itself caused a bit of a stir amongst the Leeds United club and various player agents in our very own backyard.

It is believed that Kewell's manager, Bernie Mandic, has not got an official FIFA license according to the Soccer Australia website.

Zenith Football Manager Chris Tanner stated that "We (Australian agents) are told by Soccer Australia that Bernie Mandic is NOT a licensed FIFA agent. In fact, we know that he failed the examination twice. How on earth can Leeds, Liverpool, and Kewell himself, blatantly admit to including Mandic in negotiations."

Extract from the FIFA Regulations Governing Players' Agents:

Article 17: If a player engages the services of a non-licensed players' agent, it is left to the discretion of the national association with which the player is registered (for domestic transfers) or FIFA (for international transfers):

1. (a) when judging a player's situation in any dispute arising as a result of such contracts.

2. (b) to punish the player as follows:

3.

- with a caution, censure or warning.
- with a fine of at least CHF 10,000.
- with a disciplinary suspension of up to 12 months", ended Tanner

The official list of Soccer Australia licensed managers is as follows:

BARATAUD Alain

BERNAL Andrew

BIT Romano

BLAZEVIC Franjo

BOOTS David

CHEN Tao

COLUSSO Renato

CRISMALE Michael

FERRANTE Vitale

GAMM James

GLADOVIC Miroslav

GRIMAUD John

KARIS Leo

KRNCEVIC Eddie

MANDIC Nikola

MAZZONE David

McGROUCHER Alan

NAIDOVSKI Michael

NDONGO KELLER Cyrille

NESCI Luigi

NETTELBECK Craig

REUSCH Martin

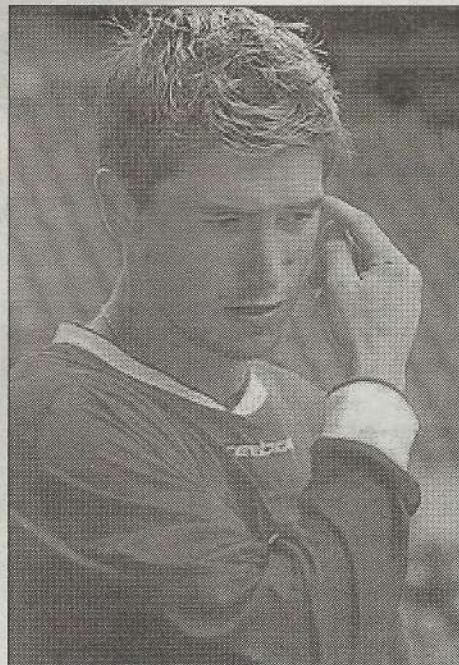
ROGIC Tomislav

RUDZKI Richard

STICCA Lou

TAMBAKIS James

TANNER Chris



Everyone's wild about Harry at his new found team!

when he compares it to other transfers that have taken place this summer, notably the high profile sale of David Beckham to Real Madrid, he's in no doubt about which club got the better deal.

He says: "I think Harry is Beckham and even more on the field. You can mark Beckham out of the game, but Harry is always likely to do something spectacular himself. I think it's an absolute bargain when you compare it to how much Real Madrid paid for Beckham."

TRANSFER NEWS

It's been a week of more player movements in the National League with a number of clubs making the plunge through the transfer system.

Sydney Olympic have been busy of late recruiting new players under rookie coach Peter Papanikitas. ABSW believe that A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt players Paul Dee and Steve Karavatasis, Canterbury Marrickville star Jimmy Nikas, St George defender Michael Kladis and the former Power defending duo of Joe Vrakic and Nick Orlic have almost tied their deals with the club.

Former Newcastle United youngster Tallan Martin

has also been approached by the club as another striker after the club's bid for Sydney Crescent Star's Tanju Balabanal fell through due to the former Turkish youth star's demands.

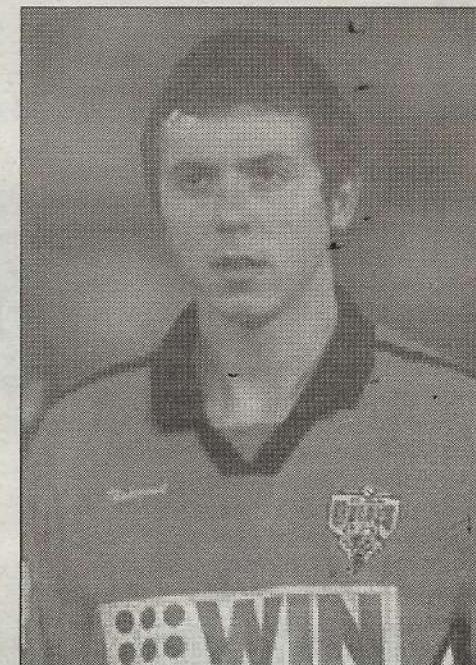
The Power have kept their spending spree on hold for the time being but it is rumoured that Pablo Cardozo is on the verge of leaving the club. Parramatta has let go striker Royce Brownlie and Ray Younis with the pair hoping to land a deal at rival National League clubs.

Younis is rumoured to be taking the role of a coach this year with the Power's youth team. New signing Lucas Pantelis is currently on trials with French club Guingamp and if successful could easily loop-hole this year's NSL for Europe. An unknown First Division Greek striker is set to be on his way to Parramatta Stadium but this has purely been speculation.

Sydney United have kick-started their pre-season proceedings with a number of changes under new coach Grant Lee. Former Power keeper Liam Reddy is said to be on his way to Edensor Park after the club lost the services of bean-pole keeper Vanja Ivesa. Its



Liam Reddy: A Sydney United target.



Naum Sekulovski: South Melbourne bound?

rumoured that Nahuel Arrarte won't be at United next season and a possible move to rivals Marconi is said to be on the cards. The Wollongong duo of David Huxley and Dean Heffernan have also made the move to Lee's exciting new squad.

Andy Vargas has reunited with his old club the Melbourne Knights, while new coach Ian Dobson searches for more youth talent around the Victorian soccer circles. Look to see as number of youth players make their debuts next season.

The Wollongong Wolves have lost the services of David Huxley and Dean Heffernan as mentioned above and could lose Shane Lyons to the Spirit and Naum Sekulovski to South Melbourne. Coach John Turner has announced player signings from the Winter Super League but that's been all, Trials are still ongoing at the club.

* PRATO WHO?

Italian Serie C side Prato have this year's adopted a more Australian approach to their first grade line-up.

Former Liverpool youngster Nick Rizzo and current trialists Zenon Caravella and Franco Parisi are currently adding some Australian flavour to the club.

Although only one player, Rizzo, has attained a first grade contract, the other two youngsters are currently trying their luck at the club.

It is said that a number of players make the trek from Serie C to the Serie A every year and the Australian trio hope to do that very soon.

TARKA TRIES OUT

David Tarka is on trial with English club Portsmouth from July 14 and will join the first team on a pre-season tour.

Tarka has attracted interest from a number of English clubs, including West Ham and Aston Villa. Portsmouth are managed by Harry Redknapp, who at previous clubs including West Ham, has made the most of Australian players.

If Tarka is signed by Pompey he will join fellow Aussie Hayden Fox at the club. He will be rubbing shoulders with the likes of former Spurs, Manchester United and England star Teddy Sheringham during the trial.

GOLD MEDAL NIGHT FOR VICTORIANS

The 2003 Crazy John's Premier League has been another close and exciting season. The 'Gold Medal Night' celebrates high achievement in Victoria's elite competition and continues to recognise outstanding performance by coaches, referees, players and clubs.

This year, clubs and players in the Veducci Women's Premier League have been welcomed as an official part of Victorian soccer's 'night of nights' recognising the development of the women's game.

It will be held at Monday at the Palladium Crown Towers on August 18th, 2003.

photooftheweek



Yet another happy Irish man lying on the floor after the day's festivities during last year's UEFA Cup between FC Porto and Celtic.

This Celtic fan found out that any place is a good place to crash, regardless of what's on the ground.

Unfortunately it wasn't to be for the Scottish Giants who failed to win the UEFA Cup but at least one in the fans section with their outrageous and wacky uniforms.

Read the caption on the shirt – enough said!
KEWELL – LIVERPOOL'S NEW NUMBER 7

NSW WINTER SUPER LEAGUE MATCH OF THE ROUND

HAJDUK FIGHTBACK SHOCKS AC



Hajduk Wanderers



AC United

by Paul Goodwin

In one of the most unlikely turnarounds of the season, Hajduk Wanderers came from two goals down to defeat neighbours AC United at Hajduk Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

Two superb goals by Hajduk, each involving substitute Navid Varess, gave the home side a victory they could only have dreamed of, given the state of the game with ten minutes to go.

AC took a while to settle but once they had established a 2-0 first half lead they did look well in control of the game.



AC United goalkeeper Claudio Fernandez collects a spectacular high ball

Daniel Schwarzer was again in sensational form for Hajduk, tipping over a goal-bound effort from Chris Giometti in the 8th minute and then making many more fine saves as the game went on.

The keeper also saved well from the ensuing corner in the 8th, as John Ghisso arrived at the near post and looked set to steer the ball in.

AC did take the lead, though, in the 26th. Chris Giometti showed good vision to pick out Ghisso, running through and the talented striker waltzed into the box on the left, before giving his marker the slip and from a tight angle beating Schwarzer from 6 yards.

Hajduk had few chances in the opening period, but Chris Camilleri was a little unlucky when AC keeper Claudio Fernandez got down well to parry and all-round performance.

eventually make safe a shot that did threaten in the 27th.

AC extended their lead in the 37th. A corner from the right, lifted over by John Kelso, was met by a bullet-like header from Ray Mandic and suddenly Hajduk looked terribly sick and sorry at 2-0 down.

Things did not look much better after the break, with AC seemingly well in control but changes by both coaches appeared to alter the pattern of the game by stages.

In the 77th a Hajduk free kick, taken out wide on the left, saw an eventual cross from the byline by Ryan Manente.

When the ball came over there was substitute Mate Jedinak to head home powerfully and well, to reduce the arrears to 2-1.

It still looked a forlorn chance that the Wanderers would be capable of staging a comeback to win the game, as AC did look to have the game in their keeping, but earlier substitute Navid Varess had other ideas.

His fabulous cross from deep on the left, picking out Nahuel Arrante at the far post, was latched onto by the Sydney United man, whose spectacular volley rocketed into the net.

It was a gem of a goal. The kind of goal that sets up a win for a team that may have looked beaten.

The winner did come, as it transpired, this time from Varess himself, in the 82nd.

Manente played the ball over the heads of the static AC defence and Varess fired in a first-time shot that the keeper could only parry, leaving Varess with the task of slamming the ball into the net.

AC, however, could have regained at least one of their lost points in the last two minutes.

First Ghisso arrived a split second too late to converge on a byline pass from Kris Holbrook and then, in the last minute, a great header from Javier Mancino was tipped over superbly by Schwarzer, who once again showed his class with some super saves and a fine all-round performance.

3

2



HAJDUK WANDERERS: Daniel Schwarzer, Robert Kuman (Mate Jedinak 74), Ryan Manente, Anthony Hartshorn, Eddie Wong (Navid Varess 57), Mark Abitarrage (C), Nahuel Arrante, Paul Crisp (Adam Arthur 71), Todd Brodie, Trent Worrall, Chris Camilleri
Sub not used: Phil Zubaks (RGK) and Dean Urosevski
Coach: Tommy McCulloch

AC UNITED: Claudio Fernandez, Robbie Grubba, Ray Mandic, Dominic Oliverio (C) (Enzo Sensone 60), John Kelso, Robbie Sacco, Adrian Zombo (Javier Mancino 60), Nathan Rivera (Kris Holbrook 70), Michael McGovern, Chris Giometti, John Ghisso
Subs not used: Chris Rizzo (RGK) and Maythen Abdal
Coach: Nick Porreca

Referee: Greg Leverton
Assistant Referees: Paul Mpiokas and Wayne Lenardon
Yellow Cards: Hajduk Wanderers: NIL
AC United: Robbie Sacco 25, Nathan Rivera 69, Kris Holbrook 71

Crescent Star Surge Ahead Towards Premiership

Crescent Star put a stranglehold around the Winter Super League Premiership trophy after disposing of a plucky Manly at Cromer Park.

While they did come away with the three points Sydney Crescent Star didn't have things their own way, and the home side dominated the game at key stages, unlucky not to at least come away with a draw.

The league leaders didn't look all that comfortable when the youthful Manly attack took the game right to them from the opening whistle.

But some loose marking cost the Dolphins two goals from two set pieces in the space of ten minutes.

The first goal came via the head of Volkan Kir, from a corner after he drifted in at the back post with a well-timed run.

Goal number two coming ten minutes short of the interval when the leagues leading scorer Tanju Balabanel leapt high at the near post to meet a free kick with a glancing header.

Pascal Julliard again did some excellent work in keeping the damaging Balabanel in check but really the lack of a quality goalscorer cost the Dolphins, who failed to convert a glut of second half possession.

Omar Obeid missed two one on one opportunities, the second hitting the crossbar, while Adam Kwasnik fared little better, sending a right foot drive over the bar with only the goalkeeper to beat.

But with Yavus Ekinci pushing his team around the park and Philip Marzec having an excellent game up front for Crescent Star they held firm, the win leaving them nine points clear at the top of the competition table. The big question is: who can possibly catch them now?

Manly Warringah Dolphins 0
Sydney Crescent Star 2
(Volkan Kir 25' Tanju Balabanel 35')
at Cromer Park, Cromer.



AC visited Wanderers at Hajduk Stadium and came off worst

WRITERS: Paul Goodwin, Greg Stock, Barry Davis
PRODUCTION: Mary Quarty
EDITOR: Ben Cubby
EDITOR-AT-LARGE: Adam Mark
PHOTOGRAPHY: Carlos Furtado
All information is courtesy of SOCCER NSW

SOCER NSW

SOCER NSW
Valentine Sport Park
235-257 Meurants Lane,
GLENWOOD NSW 2768
Phone: (02) 9629 1800
website: www.soccernsw.com.au

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NSW WINTER SUPER LEAGUE

FROM THE SIDELINES WITH GREG STOCK

Bakis is Back

Former St George and Parramatta Eagles striker Jimmy Bakis has arrived back in Australia after plying his trade in Singapore for the past two seasons.

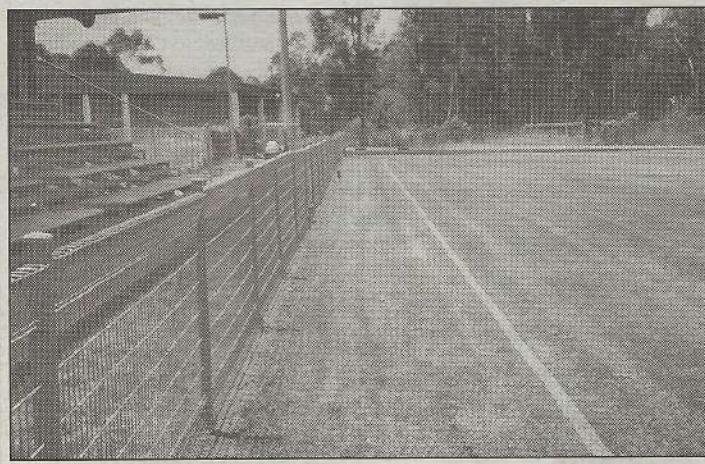
The goalscoring ace was released by Tampines Rovers after some mid-season political turmoil at the club. "We were running fourth at the time but some political wrangling between the coach and the club president saw the coach resign and it all went downhill from there" said Bakis.

"There had been a few minor problems leading up to this with the club signing some new players who didn't quite fit the mould and when we lost a few games it all started."

Now back in Australia, Bakis is training hard under Wolves coach John Turner with a view to making the 20-man squad at Wollongong.

"I am back here permanently and while I enjoyed my two seasons there, I really want to concentrate on getting back on the park and playing at the highest level here."

"I just want to spend some time with family and friends and get back into play football full on."



Manny Keeps On Learning

Saints coach Manny Spanoudakis has reaffirmed his commitment to coach the side for another season. "On a personal note, I look forward to continuing the learning process and building on the experiences learnt last season" said Spanoudakis.

"Like most coaches, I aspire to coach at the highest level and St. George has provided me with a fantastic football environment that will foster my development and ultimately help me fulfil my ambition."

It will be a busy few months for Spanoudakis, who is also in charge of the NSW Under-16 team. Meanwhile, two of the clubs juniors — Kosta Lagoudakis and Daniel Clifford — have been selected in the 20-man NSW CHS team.

Tome Ties Knot

Congratulations to A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Norman Tome who has announced his engagement to long-

time girlfriend Milena Valerio.

The couple is planning to wed sometime around the middle next year.

Con's Pizza

We don't normally use this column to plug people's businesses but I am making an exception of it in this case. If you're looking for a good pizza in the inner west area of Sydney they tell me that "Crust Gourmet" on the corner of Booth and Johnson Street's at Annandale is the go.

Not only will you have one of the best gourmet pizzas in Sydney, you might just run into a few 'notable footballers' that come from miles around to hang out with restauranteur and goalkeeper extraordinaire Con Anastasiadis!

Talent Drain

The state leaguers overseas column gets bigger every week with another handful of players making their way to Europe for trials.

Canterbury-Marrickville defender Tom Maric has attracted interest in Malta and could well be putting pen to paper there as early as next week.

His former team mate Michael West is also impressing the coaching staff at famous old English club side Brentford, leaving Canterbury coach Greg Woodhouse with a couple of holes to fill down the left side of his defence.

Ex Manly-Warringah and Rockdale City Suns midfielder David Brickell has been with English club side Gillingham the past couple of weeks playing in a couple of friendly games with the club.

The word back is that the club is impressed, though Brickell does have a stint with Coventry on his agenda should it now work out.

Milan Looks Good

One player to keep an eye out for over the next few weeks is MSC Liverpool midfielder Milan Trifunovic.

The Serbian born player is still a little short on fitness according to new coach Paul Carter but once he gets used to the Australian conditions and style of game, he should make quite an impact. Let's hope so!

MANLY WINS NORTHERN BATTLE

By Paul Goodwin

Despite the match's venue — Cromer Park — this Ryde City home match promised to be the crux of a revival for the improving Gunners.

However, as well as a heavy shower half an hour before the match, the seventh-placed Dolphins also rained on Ryde's parade and sent the Blue and Golds back to Magdala Oval very disappointed after their loss on this chilly Wednesday evening.

In front of a sparse mid-week crowd, Ryde and Manly came out firing, both teams intent on taking full points from the derby encounter.

The youthful Ryde outfit pressured first as they tried to chip through a solid Dolphins' defence, smattered with ex-Gunners like Craig Sharpley, Adam Israel and Tom Corte.

Any thoughts of hospitality towards Ryde by these ex-Ryde players, however, were shattered early.

Two goals in two minutes, somewhat against the run of play, augured badly for the young Ryde defence.

In the sixth minute an incisive Sharpley found Israel who was really motoring down the left flank.

The promising youngster beat his marker and floated a high cross to an unmarked Omar Obeid, who was left alone long enough on the penalty spot to be able to pick his spot, placing his header over the stranded Gunners' keeper Nick Apoifis.

Two minutes later an almost identical move found a determined Adam Kwasnik delivering a similar result, only this time with more ferocity.

One could only ponder the lack of communication within the Gunners' defence at that point, a defence desperately requiring an inspirational player like new signing, Damien Foxe, who is yet to return from his honeymoon.

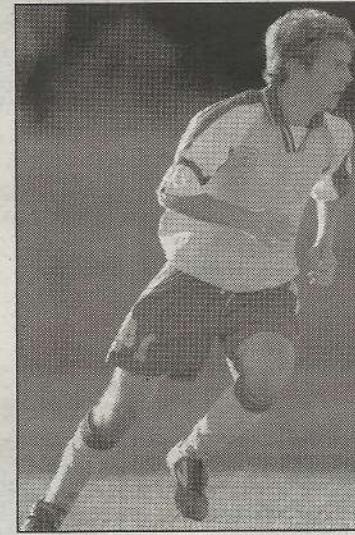
This pattern of Manly domination continued for much of the first half, as penetrating runs from Kwasnik, Obeid and Pascal Juilliard stretched Ryde's backline to the limit.

In the 17th minute, Obeid was again left unmarked and only a deft reflex save, low down, by Apoifis denied the Dolphins a third goal.

Ryde's best opportunity in the early stages came in the 11th minute, after livewire forward Scott Dixon brought the ball down and switched play, finding an unmarked Damien Pisano on the left, whose telling cross skidded past Dolphins' goalie, Jacob Rex, before missing the two fast arriving Ryde men at the far post by centimetres.

Impressive for Ryde in this first half was diminutive ex-Blacktown and Northern Spirit youngster Steven Baveas, who revelled in the hard going and showed he was not overawed by his more experienced opponents.

Indeed, it was Baveas who, in the 36th minute, slipped a tackle from Peter Steigic and found Scott Dixon just on the edge of the Dolphins' penalty area.



Steve Baveas had another strong game for Ryde City

In the 67th minute, Manly went further ahead when Kwasnik took advantage of Ryde's upfield pressure to drill home a loose ball against the run of play.

At 3-1 it did look all over for the Gunners but for Eddie Giraldo who, finding himself strangely in the forward line, finished off a good cross from Kane in the 89th minute to make the injury time added on by local referee Tom Brown (who was thrown in at the last minute when the appointed referee failed to arrive) even more frantic.

At the end of the game, both coaches were reflective. The Dolphins, Phil Moss was elated by the result.

"We always knew this would be a hard match to win, especially since it was mid-week and local derbies are, in the main, very tough encounters."

"Ryde played very well but I'm delighted with the win tonight".

Gunners' coach Chris Cowley was more reflective and understandably disappointed after such a strong comeback.

"Those two early goals are very hard to come back from. They had only five chances and scored three. We have got to fight harder for the ball and take our opportunities."

RYDE CITY: 1. Nick Apoifis. 5. Eddie Giraldo. 6. Simon Turner. 7. Greg Fuchs. 8. Scott Dixon. 9. Robbie Portelli. 10. Paul Nero. (18. Matthew Peatey 80). 12. Steven Baveas. 13. Damian Pisano. 16. Nathan Hall. 19. Andrew Mailer (17. Andrew Kane 48).
Coach: Chris Cowley

MANLY-WARRINGAH: 1. Jacob Rex. 4. Phil Moss. 5. Stuart Turner. 6. Peter Steigic (11. Damian Rosenthal 64). 7. Craig Sharpley. 8. Tom Corte. 9. Adam Kwasnik (15. Jason Tee 75). 10. Anthony Martin. 12. Adam Israel. 14. Pascal Juilliard. 17. Omar Obeid. (2. Anthony Short 80).
Coach: Phil Moss
Referee: Tom Brown (Manly Warringah Association).

Stanmore Stumble in 'Desert'

Stanmore's post season ambitions were dealt a blow with a stunning 2-1 loss to the rapidly improving MSC Liverpool at Arlington Oval on Sunday.

While the loss closes the gap between the Hawks and sixth placed Hajduk Wanderers to just one competition point, the real talking point of the afternoon was the parlous state of the playing surface, which looks more like a desert than a football pitch.

With both sides unable to play the close passing game it was all down to route one football. With players taking two and three touches to wrest control of the ball it was no surprise to see two of the games three goals coming from skill errors.

Alex Araujo had one of the easiest goals of his career when Stanmore goalkeeper Peter Spathis split a low cross from Anthony Kanaan which gave the striker an easy tap in.

In the second half it was Anthony Sarmonikas' turn, and he made light work of a defensive error from Peter Moon to beat ekeeper Cem Akili at the

near post from a tight angle.

But, just as it seemed the game would conclude with a draw, veteran midfielder Anthony Driene bobbed up at the near post unmarked to put away a corner from Daniel Willoughby with less than three minutes remaining.

Having dropped just two of their past seven games, the win was no surprise to coach Paul Carter, who firmly believes his club can claim a few scalps in the run home.

"On this pitch it was always going to be difficult to play football so we opted for the long ball and it worked for us" said Carter.

"We showed today that we can match it with any side in the competition and we took advantage of the poor conditions with some hard running up front. Any side expecting us to roll over in the run home has another thing coming."

STANMORE HAWKS 1 (Anthony Sarmonikas 65') **MSC LIVERPOOL 2** (Alex Araujo 9' Anthony Driene 88') at Arlington Oval, Dulwich Hill



NSW WINTER SUPER LEAGUE

FARIA SNATCHES DRAW FOR DRAGONS



Fraser Park Dragons



Dulwich Hill



Fraser Park's Clint Mayberry created a goal for the Dragons, but wasn't so lucky at the other end

by Paul Goodwin

Just as they had in the first round catch-up game at Lambert Park, derby rivals Dulwich Hill racked up three goals against old foes Fraser Park last Saturday, this time at Fraser's own cauldron in Sydenham. This time, however, they managed only a draw.

Fraser were under a lot of pressure from Dulwich in the first half hour and narrowly avoided going a goal or two down in that period, thanks to some wayward finishing by their opponents and some desperate clearances.

Thus it came as a surprise when Fraser raced to a 2-0 half time lead, but to judge from the first half showing by Dulwich this game was far from over; and so it proved.

Dulwich began the second half as they had the started the first, fired up and ready to grab back the initiative; but they got one lucky break after another to eventually draw level again and almost pulled

FRASER PARK: Steve Angelov, David Cuda, Alex Leris, Michael Kladis, Scott Wells, Bill Petrovski (Greg Collins 62), Martin Bourke (Archie Markopoulos 72), Clint Mayberry, Tony Faria, Liam Austin (Mark Guerrero 66), Manny Papageorgiou
Subs not used: Daniel Farias (RGK), Paulo Oliveira
Coach: Ian Gillan

DULWICH HILL: Michael Xuereb, Chris Veloski, David Radenkovic (Jerry Barros 46), Helder Cardoso, Milan Cindric, Jose Mendes (C), Joe Fichera, Ben Delicata, Ismael Arrarte, Eric Papaianni (Xavier Schnyder 58), Anthony Mondello
Subs not used: Macario De Souza, Paul Jurcevic
Coach: Jim Patikas

Referee: Jonathan Streeter
Assistant Referees: Jim Barnes and Graham McKenzie
Yellow Cards:
Fraser Park: Bill Petrovski 53, Michael Kladis 82, David Cuda 85; Dulwich Hill: Milan Cindric 40, Helder Cardoso 42, Ben Delicata 62.

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Fraser Park Dragons | 3 |
| Dulwich Hill | 3 |

off a shock away win.

They managed to hit the front with eight minutes to spare and it needed a rare, headed goal, deep into stoppage time, from Tony Faria, to salvage a point for the Dragons.

Most at the ground, including a sprinkling of familiar coaching faces, such as Brian Brown, Roberto Viera and Mike Urubalo, would have enjoyed the entertainment, but in truth it was a game marked by many fundamental errors and few of the goals were particularly classy.

Both teams forced early corners and free kicks, but Fraser's only real chance fell to Liam Austin in the 9th minute with the young striker firing wide.

Dulwich went closest themselves in the 20th when Joe Fichera blasted just wide, after Milan Cindric had nodded the ball back, following a free kick.

David Radojkovic was caught napping by Bill Petrovski in the 26th, but Petrovski's low shot from distance was taken well by Michael Xuereb. Fraser hit the lead in the 31st.

A Tony Faria corner from the right was cleared deep by the keeper, but Martin Bourke was able to gain possession and then cross deep to the far right, where both Austin and Faria were lurking behind the defence.

With a Dulwich defender already stationed on the line, when the ball was crossed, the flag stayed down and the Fraser pair converged on the goal, with a quick pass from Austin allowing Faria to tuck the ball under the body of the keeper.

Ismael Arrarte broke away for Dulwich in the next minute and appeared to be dragged back by a defender, but referee Jonathan Streeter was not interested in any penalty appeals and waved play on.

Fraser doubled their lead in the 37th when the keeper failed to claim a cross from Clint Mayberry and Austin was then able to finish, once Faria's initial effort had been blocked.

Austin was almost able to increase the Fraser lead in the 51st minute, but some brilliant keeping by an alert Xuereb raced out to deny him, the smother inside the area being timed with precision.

Dulwich had their own stroke of luck in the 57th when a deep ball pumped into the goalmouth was diverted into his own net by Mayberry after the Fraser keeper had called for the ball to be cleared.

Seeking to clear the high ball over the bar Mayberry found the top left corner of Steve Angelov's net, instead, to give the visitors a new lease of life.

Four minutes later Dulwich were level.

Ben Delicata, who had been causing a few problems with his probing runs, crossed smartly for substitute Xavier Schnyder to slide in and finish well at the near post.

The visitors then managed to hit the lead in the 82nd.

Jose Mendes took a free kick out wide on the left and drove his low shot through a crowded goalmouth and found the bottom right corner of the net.

Fraser looked beaten then, but summoned another effort and forced a series of corners and free kicks as the clock wound down.

Scott Wells crossed from the right and Faria was not picked up at the far post and with Archie Markopoulos also handy, Faria sent a bullet header into the top left corner of Xuereb's net. Moments later the full time whistle blew.

To score with that header it needed to be firm and accurate and its timing was perfect by Faria and for Fraser.

Few would have believed they could snatch that late point, but Dulwich coach Jim Patikas refused to blame his side for that last minute lapse of concentration.

"We played our hearts out today," he said, as the team recovered in the dressing room.

"It was a great derby and we played

our best and I am proud of every one of my team."

His counterpart Ian Gillan sat gloomily in the quietest corner of the same amenities building, pondering over yet another loss of vital points, but unlike many at the ground he felt his side had played well enough to win and thought they did enough to do just that.

But the final score said otherwise and

conceding three goals tells the tale really.

After this setback a tilt at the title looks even harder for Fraser, while Dulwich will be happy to have picked up 4 points out of 6 from these derby encounters.

They also now look set to occupy a spot well away from the bottom, which was the club's mission when they appointed the affable Patikas in mid season.

University Surprises Sutherland

Sutherland's push for a spot in the Super League Semi-Final series suffered an unlikely setback, when beaten 2-1 by Sydney University on Sunday afternoon.

Without the services of striker Mathew Borg, the Sharks can only hold themselves to blame for failing to take their chances and allowing their opponents the chance to come storming back during a very physical second half.

Dominating the first half, the Sharks could only manage one goal, coming via the right foot of Monte Pfrengle, on the 23rd minute mark. James Meyer, on his return to the Uni line-up, held firm between the sticks, keeping his side in the hunt up until the break.

In the second stanza, Uni came back

strongly, David Gill able to mop up a Rob Smithies thunderbolt that had been blocked by Zlatko Jovosevski, the loose ball falling to Gill at the back post who made no mistake with the follow up.

Smithies himself got on the score sheet with what would turn out to be the winner, putting a glancing header on a shot from Gill after good lead-up work from Adam Snyder.

The loss leaves Sutherland vulnerable in fourth spot with a couple of clubs within striking distance. While Monte Pfrengle was arguably the pick of the Sharks squad, Peter Feehan and Tim Wilson did well for the home side, whose coach Stewart Porter must have sensed the irony, after bringing his former team unstuck in such a key game.

FIRST DIVISION NEWS

with Paul Goodwin

In the day's other encounter Liverpool Bossy dealt a blow to Nepean's promotion hopes with a 1-0 win at Cook Park St Marys, a Saula Matayola goal in the 61st settling the issue.

Matayola, who moved from Western Rage only recently, had also trialled with

Nepean during the off season and his header was all that stood between the sides at the finish.

Nepean had to do without Sean Babic, who was attending a wedding and the club had already said goodbye to Buddy Farah, who has returned to play in Lebanon.

Liverpool fielded five players under 18 and were reported to be pleased with their performance, despite the loss, as they are now looking towards next season.

Liverpool will be the opponents for Hurstville next Sunday and the derby will be played out in front of some distinguished guests including the local MP Kevin Green, member for Lakemba and current Health Minister, who, as the former Sports Minister, has played his part in the club's future funding with his help in securing a much needed grant for the Hurstville club.

Belmore came back when a corner was not cleared and Abbas Saad had time to shoot, with the final touch going to John Skufis.

Hurstville continued to play well but the woodwork denied them twice, Jason Vella and Robert Babaic both hitting the post before Anthony Jusic ran onto a ball from Babaic on the right and headed past the keeper and then Denis Alilovic again found the net.

This time he combined with his



Hills United take on Mount Pritchard in the NSW First Division

While Belmore did lead early from a goal by Peter Stellios, Hurstville fought back to lead 2-1.

A left footed volley from Denis Alilovic did the trick and then Luke Glavas got the second after Joe Badrov had combined with Glavas before Alilovic got involved and flicked the ball on for Glavas to hit the ball low past the keeper.

Belmore came back when a corner was not cleared and Abbas Saad had time to shoot, with the final touch going to John Skufis.

Hurstville continued to play well but the woodwork denied them twice, Jason Vella and Robert Babaic both hitting the post before Anthony Jusic ran onto a ball from Babaic on the right and headed past the keeper and then Denis Alilovic again found the net.

This time he combined with his

brother Tony and found himself free 30 yards out from goal, unleashing a screamer that gave the keeper no chance.

Over at Cook Park Mount Pritchard recalled forgotten hero Fabian Screpis for the visit of Hills United and on his first grade debut for the season the long time Mountie scored both goals in his side's 2-0 win.

A cross from the left by Cary Bangs was volleyed superbly into the net by Screpis, two minutes into the second half, but things were tight right up until the 87th minute when the home side claimed the win.

This time Dujon Webster was involved in a move that saw his initial cross cut out by the Hills' defence which then allowed Webster to lay the ball back to Screpis who then rifled it home from 12 yards.

Mounties' coach Daryl Glover can hardly leave Screpis out of the starting line up now, after his two goal haul, as goals have been very hard to come by this season and injuries have taken their toll on many of the team's regulars.

In the other important game on Sunday Wanderers Cedars maintained the pressure on Northern Tigers and Hurstville with a 6-3 win at the Calabria ground.

A Robbie Issa hat trick paved the way for the Wanderers who were never headed at any stage on their way to another impressive win.

Bathurst also kept up their own challenge with a 2-0 win at Mount Druitt, thanks to goals from Adam Collins and Mark Rooke while Wollongong United defeated White City 4-1 in the Illawarra.



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NSW WINTER SUPER LEAGUE PREVIEW

with Greg Stock

The Winter Super League season is really starting to hot up with just six weeks remaining before the final series.

With eighteen competition points still available, it is definitely the business end of the season as teams begin to build some momentum for the all-important run home.

It all kicks off this Wednesday night with a couple of rescheduled games. Hurstville City Minotaurs are meeting Sydney University at Jensen Park and AC United play Fraser Park at The Serbian Centre.

The Fraser Park versus AC United game looks an fascinating match-up, with the winner moving to outright second on the competition table.

On Saturday the 19th of July, round

twenty-two kicks off with a couple of very interesting games, the first of which is at Kogarah Jubilee Oval, where Fraser Park will meet Manly-Warringah.

The Dragons will be hoping their use of Kogarah Oval will reap the same rewards as their previous match there against Sutherland, a 4-0 win earlier in the year.

Manly will have their season on the line and need to win at least four of their last five games (they also have a bye) to give themselves any chance.

Later that evening, fourth placed Sutherland have a chance to springboard away from fifth-placed Stanmore when these two sides clash at well-appointed Seymour Shaw Park at 6pm.

The Sharks will have their fingers crossed that new striker Mathew Borg

will recover from an ankle injury in time to help out the Sharks, who have won three of their past five starts.



Both teams slipped up against opposition that, on paper, they should have defeated last week, so both are on the re-

bound and hungry for a win.

On Sunday, the league leaders Sydney Crescent Star take the trip across town to Ernie Smith Reserve to meet MSC Liverpool.

Fresh from their win over Stanmore, MSC are starting to build some momentum, having lost just two of their past nine.

When they last met these two sides scored ten goals between them (a 6-4 win to Crescent Star) and another high scoring game is on the cards. At Arlington Oval, Tommy McCulloch's Hajduk Wanderers have Dulwich Hill in their sights, as they desperately try to break into the top five.

The Wanderers are riding high after last week's last gasp win over AC United. Dulwich Hill have improved sharply since Jim Patikas took over as coach. The

duel between the 'formeroos' on the coaching bench is expected to be fierce.

Hurstville City Minotaurs coach Peter 'The General' Sarikakis still feels his club can win five of their six games and force their way into the Semi-Finals, and that all starts this week with the visit of Macarthur on Sunday.

Anything but a win is the end for the Minotaurs who will look to the diminutive Aheleas Kotsopoulos to lead the way.

To close out the round, Ryde City will host rival Sydney University in a tough game, and all eyes will be on Ryde's Steve Baveas who made quite an impression last weekend with a hat trick.

Both teams are coming off upset wins last week, so it should be a hard-fought affair. Ryde seem to be on the improve as the season wanes, but they will find Uni a tough proposition. AC United will enjoy the weekend bye.

Round 21 NSW WINTER SUPER LEAGUE SCOREBOARD

FIRST GRADE

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| STANMORE HAWKS | 1 | MSC LIVERPOOL | 2 |
| (A Salomonas 65') | | (A Araujo 9', A Driene 88') | |
| FRASER PARK DRAGONS | 3 | DULWICH HILL | 3 |
| (A Faria 31'87', L Austin 37') | | (og 54', X Schnyder 55', J Mendes 81') | |
| MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS | 0 | SYDNEY CRESCENT STAR | 2 |
| | | (V Kir 25', T Balabanel 35') | |
| HAJDUK WANDERERS | 3 | AC UNITED | 2 |
| (M Jedinak 77', N Arrarte 81', N Varess 82') | | (J Ghiso 26', R Mancino 37') | |
| RYDE CITY | 4 | MACARTHUR RAMS | 1 |
| (N Hall, S Baveas 3) | | (A Borg) | |
| SYDNEY UNIVERSITY | 2 | SUTHERLAND SHIRE | 1 |
| (D Gill 51', R Smithies 65') | | (M Pfrengle 23') | |

UNDER 21

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| STANMORE HAWKS | 0 | MSC LIVERPOOL | 2 |
| FRASER PARK DRAGONS | 3 | DULWICH HILL | 1 |
| MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS | 2 | SYDNEY CRESCENT STAR | 1 |
| HAJDUK WANDERERS | 2 | AC UNITED | 0 |
| RYDE CITY | 0 | MACARTHUR RAMS | 3 |
| | | SYDNEY UNIVERSITY | 3 |
| | | SUTHERLAND SHIRE | 0 |

UNDER 19

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| STANMORE HAWKS | 5 | MSC LIVERPOOL | 1 |
| FRASER PARK DRAGONS | 0 | DULWICH HILL | 2 |
| MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS | 4 | SYDNEY CRESCENT STAR | 2 |
| HAJDUK WANDERERS | 2 | AC UNITED | 2 |
| RYDE CITY | 2 | MACARTHUR RAMS | 0 |
| | 0 | SYDNEY UNIVERSITY | 2 |

FIRST GRADE

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|---------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| Sydney Crescent Star | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 56 | 35 | 21 | 40 |
| AC United | 18 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 31 | 21 | 10 | 31 |
| Fraser Park Dragons | 17 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 43 | 23 | 20 | 30 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 18 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 31 | 27 | 4 | 30 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 17 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 30 | 29 | 1 | 29 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 26 | 17 | 9 | 28 |
| Manly Warringah Dolphins | 20 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 35 | 35 | 0 | 24 |
| Dulwich Hill | 19 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 30 | 36 | -6 | 20 |
| Hurstville City Minotaurs | 17 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 21 | 33 | -12 | 20 |
| Sydney University | 16 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 25 | 28 | -3 | 19 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 16 | 24 | -8 | 18 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 19 | 36 | -17 | 14 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 26 | 45 | -19 | 12 |

UNDER 21

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|--------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| Manly Warringah Dolphins | 20 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 44 | 28 | 16 | 38 |
| Fraser Park Dragons | 15 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 41 | 15 | 26 | 37 |
| AC United | 18 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 39 | 20 | 19 | 36 |
| Dulwich Hill | 19 | 11 | 0 | 8 | 30 | 26 | 4 | 33 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 36 | 13 | 23 | 32 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 16 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 30 |
| Sydney University | 16 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 32 | 23 | 9 | 26 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 17 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 30 | 26 | 4 | 25 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 26 | 36 | -10 | 20 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 16 | 30 | -14 | 12 |
| H'ville City Minotaurs | 16 | 3 | 1 | 12 | 17 | 45 | -28 | 10 |
| Sydney Crescent Star | 17 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 26 | 51 | -25 | 8 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 11 | 48 | -37 | 8 |

UNDER 19

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|--------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| Manly Warringah Dolphins | 20 | 14 | 3 | 3 | 51 | 18 | 33 | 45 |
| Sydney Crescent Star | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 47 | 23 | 24 | 40 |
| AC United | 17 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 45 | 22 | 23 | 35 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 18 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 37 | 32 | 5 | 30 |
| Dulwich Hill | 18 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 29 | 26 | 3 | 29 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 16 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 25 | 28 | -3 | 24 |
| Fraser Park Dragons | 15 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 23 | 22 | 1 | 21 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 6 | 2 | 10 | 19 | 30 | -11 | 20 |
| Sydney University | 17 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 26 | 35 | -9 | 18 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 25 | 36 | -11 | 17 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 18 | 32 | -14 | 15 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 23 | 40 | -17 | 15 |
| H'ville City Minotaurs | 17 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 14 | 38 | -24 | 8 |

NEXT ROUND 22

FIRST GRADE

| HOME TEAM | AWAY TEAM | DATE | KICK-OFF | GROUND |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Fraser Park Dragons | v Manly Warringah | Sat 19 July | 3.00pm | Kogarah Jubilee Oval |
| Sutherland Sharks | v Stanmore Hawks | Sat 19 July | 6.00pm | Seymour Shaw Soccer Stadium |
| Dulwich Hill | v Hajduk Wanderers | Sun 20 | | |



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NSW FIRST DIVISION

LEADERS KEEP ON WINNING

with Paul Goodwin

Leaders Northern Tigers consolidated their lead with a 2-0 win over Schofields Scorpions on Saturday at Parklands Oval.

The win came at a price, though, just as it had the previous week.

Already with a weakened squad, due to injuries to keeper Ricky Oppedisano and suspended brother Anthony plus the absence overseas of striker Adam Foti, the Tigers' leading goalscorer Ben Jenke got his fifth caution of the season and will miss the next match too.

The game against Schofields was always going to be a hard one for the Tigers' coach Fred Mesiti and his men.

With many of his regular first graders out from this game, for various reasons, Mesiti had to call on all his best reserves to make up a team to play a rejuvenated Scorpions with their own new imports.

From the kick off, the Tigers took control of the game, however, soon having their opponents on the defensive with some brilliant soccer.

At the back, Matt Hunter and Danny Hurtwitz held their opponents away from

the Tigers goal, where Luke Femia was standing in for the injured Oppedisano.

The Tigers kept hammering away at the opposition goal and, after a great break from Scott Ryan, former Ryde City youngster and Ku-ring-gai junior Jon McCulloch steered the ball into the back of the net.

The game continued at a fast pace and the Tigers' superior fitness did not let them down.

Matt Hunter, together with Marcus Frost, captain for the day, dominated the midfield in the latter part of the first half.

The second half started in similar fashion to the first. Ben Jenke, just as he had in the first half, troubled the Schofields backline with his scintillating runs and thus created havoc for the opposition until constant pressure got the better of them.

In the 55th minute Jenke was brought down in the penalty box and took his chance to increase his personal goal tally to put the Tigers further ahead.

With that early strike from McCulloch to get them into the lead and the Tigers going one better when Ben Jenke converted that penalty the home side then

held on to win the game and cement their place at the top.

But chasing hard now are Hurstville ZSC who beat Belmore easily on the Saturday in the first of a double header for the weekend against the Hercules side.

It looked all too easy for Hurstville, who could have had many more than the five they managed in the 5-1 win, only some brilliant keeping by the Belmore custodian and the frame of the goal at Blick Oval standing between Hurstville and a double figure scoreline.

After a build up from deep Anthony Jusic also got involved in the fifth goal, sending Luke Glavas on his way before the latter slipped the ball in the path of Joe Simic who drilled the ball home, in off the left hand post, in the 73rd.

Joe Calleta and Joe Simic both missed some sitters in the game, according to coach John Gagro, but the home keeper was the real stumbling block.

Belmore's late consolation came in the 80th from David Hofierka, but by then it was all too late. The teams backed up the next day at Hurstville Oval.

Hurstville had been missing the presence of experienced sweeper Richard Plesa for the first game but he was available for the second.

— And also Ante Majetic has been out for a while now and tough defender Carl Lubric is yet to return from injury, so the team challenging most strongly for the title has done well with reduced numbers in recent matches.

FIRST DIVISION SCORERS

As at Sunday 13th July 2003

| | |
|------|--|
| 16 - | Ben Jenke (Northern Tigers), |
| 11 - | Male Vukosa (Hills United), Adam Foti (Northern Tigers), |
| 10 - | Marc Hoenselaars (Nepean), Saula Matayalo (Western Rage/Liverpool Bossy), |
| 9 - | Hassam Nouh (Wanderers Cedars), |
| 8 - | Eddie Adam (Western Rage), |
| 7 - | Jason Mesiti (Northern Tigers), Gus Orcajo (Wanderers), Lucas Flynn (Mount Pritchard), Dean Culina (Hurstville ZSC), Luke Glavas (Hurstville), |
| 6 - | Zeljko Babic (Nepean), Nabil Codmani (Wanderers Cedars), Todd Macrae (Schofields), Nino Marollo (Mt Druitt), Antony Jusic (Hurstville ZSC), Denis Alilovic (Hurstville ZSC), Robbie Issa (Wanderers Cedars), |
| 5 - | Miro Maco (Mount Pritchard), Daniel Lownds (Schofields), Sam Solidakis (Belmore), Marcus Frost (Northern Tigers), Aaron Burgess (Hills United), Michael Hoenselaars (Nepean), Mladen Damjanovic (Liverpool Bossy), David Hofierka (Belmore), |

WINTER SUPER & STATE LEAGUE RESULTS & TABLES

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE - RESCHEDULED FROM ROUND 14:

FIRST GRADE: Ryde City 2 (S Dixon 40m E Giraldo 85m) Manly Warringah Dolphins 3 (O Obied 6m A Kwasnik 8/60m). **GRADE 21:** Ryde City 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 3, Sydney Crescent Star 0 Dulwich Hill 3. **GRADE 19:** Ryde City 0 Manly Warringah Dolphins 4, Sydney Crescent Star 1 Dulwich Hill 1.

ROUND 21:

FIRST GRADE: Fraser Park Dragons 3 (A Faria 31/87m L Austin 37m) Dulwich Hill 3 (Own goal 54m X Schneider 55m J Menden 81m), Ryde City 4 Macarthur Rams 1, Sydney University 2 (D Gill 51m R Smithies 65m) Sutherland Sharks 1 (M Pfrengle 23m), Stanmore Hawks 1 (A Sarmonakis 65m) MSC Liverpool 2 (A Araujo 9m A Diene 88m), Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 Sydney Crescent Star 2 (V Kir 25m T Balabanel 35m), Hajduk Wanderers 3 (M Jedinak 77m N Arriate 81m N Varese 82m) AC United 2 (J Ghiso 26m R Mancino 37m).

GRADE 21: Fraser Park Dragons 3 Dulwich Hill 1, Ryde City 0 Macarthur Rams 3, Sydney University 3 Sutherland Sharks 0, Stanmore Hawks 0 MSC Liverpool 2, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Sydney Crescent Star 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2 AC United 0.

GRADE 19: Fraser Park Dragons 0 Dulwich Hill 2, Ryde City 2 Macarthur Rams 0, Sydney University 0 Sutherland Sharks 2, Stanmore Hawks 5 MSC Liverpool 1, Manly Warringah Dolphins 4 Sydney Crescent Star 2, Hajduk Wanderers 2 AC United 2.

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|-------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Sydney CS | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 56 | 35 | 21 | 40 |
| AC United | 18 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 31 | 21 | 10 | 31 |
| Fraser Park | 17 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 43 | 23 | 20 | 30 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 18 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 31 | 27 | 4 | 30 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 17 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 30 | 29 | 1 | 29 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 7 | 3 | 26 | 17 | 9 | 28 | |
| Manly Warringah | 20 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 35 | 35 | 0 | 24 |
| Dulwich Hill | 19 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 30 | 36 | -6 | 20 |
| H'ville City | 17 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 21 | 33 | -12 | 20 |
| Sydney University | 16 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 25 | 28 | -3 | 19 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 16 | 24 | -8 | 18 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 19 | 36 | -17 | 14 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 26 | 45 | -19 | 12 |

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 21

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|-------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Manly Warringah | 20 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 44 | 28 | 16 | 38 |
| Fraser Park | 15 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 41 | 15 | 26 | 37 |
| AC United | 18 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 39 | 20 | 19 | 36 |
| Dulwich Hill | 19 | 11 | 0 | 8 | 30 | 26 | 4 | 33 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 36 | 13 | 23 | 32 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 16 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 30 |
| Sydney University | 16 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 32 | 23 | 9 | 26 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 17 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 30 | 26 | 4 | 25 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 26 | 36 | -10 | 20 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 16 | 30 | -14 | 12 |
| H'ville City | 16 | 3 | 1 | 12 | 17 | 45 | -28 | 10 |
| Sydney CS | 17 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 26 | 51 | -25 | 8 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 11 | 48 | -37 | 8 |

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE GRADE 19

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|-------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Manly Warringah | 20 | 14 | 3 | 3 | 51 | 18 | 33 | 45 |
| Sydney CS | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 47 | 23 | 24 | 40 |
| AC United | 17 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 45 | 22 | 23 | 35 |
| Sutherland Sharks | 18 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 37 | 32 | 5 | 30 |
| Dulwich Hill | 18 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 29 | 26 | 3 | 29 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 16 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 25 | 28 | -3 | 24 |
| Fraser Park | 15 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 23 | 22 | 1 | 21 |
| Ryde City | 18 | 6 | 2 | 10 | 19 | 30 | -11 | 20 |
| Sydney University | 17 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 26 | 35 | -9 | 18 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 17 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 25 | 36 | -11 | 17 |
| MSC Liverpool | 17 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 18 | 32 | -14 | 15 |
| Macarthur Rams | 18 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 23 | 40 | -17 | 15 |
| H'ville City | 17 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 14 | 38 | -24 | 8 |

STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE GRADE 21

| * | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|--------------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|-----|
| Wanderers Cedars | 21 | 14 | 2 | 5 | 72 | 22 | 50 | 44 |
| Nepean Assoc. | 21 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 53 | 24 | 29 | 41 |
| Northern Tigers | 21 | 12 | 4 | 5 | 48 | 19 | 29 | 41 |
| Mt Pritchard | 20 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 49 | 24 | 25 | 40 |
| Hills United | 20 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 66 | 22 | 44 | 39 |
| S'fields Scorpions | 20 | 10 | 6 | 4 | 49 | 21 | 28 | 36 |
| Hurstville ZSC | 20 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 43 | 28 | 15 | 34 |
| Mt Druitt Town | 19 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 28 | 31 | -3 | 29 |



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YOUTH LEAGUE REVIEW

by Barry Davis

Things are really hotting up in every competition as the race for the various titles enters the final stretch. From this point onward, many people will regard every point as doubly precious for the sake of the individual team's performance as well as for the Club Championship placing.

While the race for points is viewed as being very important, dropping points is not exactly going to mean the end of the world for anyone. In fact, the only thing the really matters is that the players have given their best to every match and that the quality of their play has improved as a result. What more can anyone want? If they have given their all, nothing more can be asked of them. The better team or at least the team that makes better use of their opportunities deserves to take the points.

In recent weeks I have heard many stories of Youth League referees receiving considerable abuse from the sideline and sadly, that situation may yet deteriorate in the coming weeks as supporters place increasing emphasis on results. The abuse of referees and their assistants is a useless exercise because it will not cause the referee to change or improve his or her performance. There's no doubt that referees make mistakes but then so do the players. In the vast majority of cases, these can be put down to errors in judgement and nothing more. Obviously, the game would be far better if we all bit our tongues when we feel that a referee or assistant referee has made a mistake. Abuse and derision is not going to help anyone.

Premier Youth League - Round 21

Blacktown City has scooted away to a seventeen point lead on the combined table after they took all the points from their clash with fourth-placed Northern Spirit at the Gabbie Stadium. They were aided and abetted by the fact the second-placed Olympic Sharks could only earn six points from their visit to mid-table Newcastle United. Parramatta Eagles (3rd) and Marconi Stallions (6th) settled for seven points apiece from their meeting at Melita Stadium. On Saturday Wollongong Wolves retained fifth spot when they took eleven points from their home games against Bankstown City Cubs. However, on Sunday the Wolves played the Round 19 catch-up matches against A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers and took twelve of the available points and that has moved them up to fourth place. The Tigers had grabbed nine points at home to Penrith Panthers and Central Coast shared the points evenly with visiting Sydney United. Sutherland Shire Sharks hosted Southern Branch and they took four points each from the 12s, 13s and 14s matches played on the day.

GOAL WATCH: There were eighty-four goals scored in this division for an average of 2.54 goals per match.

Grade 12. Blacktown City continued their unbeaten run with a 1-0 defeat of second-placed Northern Spirit and they now lead the way by eight points, no doubt bringing a smile to the face of Demons boss and team coach Ken Schembri. Third-placed Olympic Sharks suffered a 1-0 loss to sixth-placed Newcastle United and that leaves the Sharks eight points behind Spirit. Wollongong Wolves were a point further adrift after they beat Bankstown City Cubs 2-1 on Saturday but they added three more to their tally with a 2-1 win over A.P.I.A. Leichhardt on Sunday. Penrith Panthers hung on to fifth-place on goal difference when they suffered a 1-0 loss to mid-table A.P.I.A. Leichhardt. Marconi Stallions shaded Parramatta Eagles 2-1 and Central Coast beat Sydney United by the odd goal in five, Sutherland Shire Sharks and Southern Branch battled out a scoreless draw.

Grade 13. Olympic Sharks continued their winning ways with a very healthy away 4-0 result over mid-table Newcastle United to maintain their five-point lead on the table. Second-placed Blacktown City rolled third-placed Northern Spirit by the surprisingly large scoreline of 3-0 to give the Paul Costantini-coached Demons a five-point buffer and relegate Spirit to fourth spot. Parramatta Eagles moved to third after their 2-2 draw with Marconi Stallions and Sutherland Shire Sharks retained fifth place after their 3-1 win over Southern Branch. Wollongong Wolves were too good for Bankstown City Cubs with a 3-0 final result and they continued their success with a Rd 19 3-1 win over A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers on Sunday. On Saturday the Tigers had beaten Penrith Panthers 2-1. Sydney United held Central Coast to a 2-2 draw.

Grade 14. Competition leaders Parramatta Eagles continued their run of success with a 1-0 win over third-placed Marconi Stallions. Blacktown City are second with a four-point buffer after they shaded mid-table Northern Spirit 1-0. Fourth-placed Wollongong Wolves were a bit too good for mid-table Bankstown City Cubs on Saturday, winning the encounter 2-1 before they slipped up on Sunday with a 4-3 loss to A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers. Olympic Sharks are fifth after they scored once without reply against Newcastle United. Sydney United are lingering on the edge of the top five after they accounted for seventh-placed Central Coast 2-1. A.P.I.A. Leichhardt beat Penrith Panthers 2-1 and last-placed Southern Branch got home by the odd goal in five over Sutherland Shire Sharks and they came off the bottom for the first time this season.

Grade 15. Marconi Stallions stretched their lead to five points after they accounted for fourth-placed Parramatta Eagles 1-0 and second-placed Olympic Sharks suffered a shock 2-0 loss to Newcastle United who are found in the bottom half of the table. That resulted moved the Sharks back to third position. Blacktown City have moved to second on goal difference after they rolled fifth-placed Northern Spirit 2-1. Joe Siric's Penrith Panthers recorded their second win for the season with a 2-1 scoreline over APIA Leichhardt. Wollongong Wolves held Bankstown City Cubs to a scoreless draw that may cost the Cubs a place in the Finals. The Wolves played APIA Leichhardt on Sunday and picked up three more points with a 1-0 result. Sydney United trumped Central Coast 2-0.

Grade 17. Newcastle United extended their lead to five points after they beat Olympic Sharks 2-1, causing the Sharks to drop back to fifth spot. Second-placed Wollongong Wolves drew 2-2 with third-placed Bankstown City Cubs on Saturday and then backed up for a 4-2 win against A.P.I.A. Leichhardt on Sunday. Fifth-placed Parramatta Eagles got the better of Marconi Stallions, win-

ning the contest 2-0. Penrith Panthers overcame A.P.I.A. Leichhardt 2-0 and Blacktown City were a bit too good for Northern Spirit winning their encounter 3-1. Central Coast surprisingly knocked off Sydney United 2-0 at home.

Super Youth League - Round 21

Last week a glitch that caused me to wrongly give Macarthur Rams the overall lead when AC United were in fact the Combined Table front runners. AC United have gone further ahead, ten points in fact, this week after they snatched thirteen points from their encounter with fifth-placed Eastern Suburbs. Macarthur are second despite earning a meagre four points from the clash with fourth-placed Nepean and Manly Warringah Dolphins are third after their twelve point haul at Mingara Lakers. Northern Tigers took thirteen points from wooden-spooners Bonnyrigg White Eagles and they are now in a strong position to challenge for a place in the overall top five. Blacktown Association are ahead of St George on goal difference after they split the point evenly on Saturday. Camden Tigers took eight points from the slightly better performed Hills United to establish a healthy buffer on the bottom two.

GOAL WATCH: There were 102 goals scored in this division for an average of 2.91 goals per match.

Grade 12. Manly Warringah Dolphins recovered from last week's loss to post a very healthy scoreline as they overcame Mingara Lakers and they continue to lead the way by two points. Second-placed AC United also had a good win, 3-1 over Eastern Suburbs who clung onto fifth-place. Northern Tigers have retained third spot after they accounted for Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3-0 and Macarthur Rams are fourth despite their 1-1 draw with seventh-placed Nepean. Blacktown Association remains within striking distance of a top-five berth, after their scoreless draw with mid-table St George. Fairfield Bulls enjoyed a 4-1 romp with Hajduk Wanderers and Hills United edged out Camden Tigers 1-0.

Grade 13. AC United still lead the competition on goal difference after they whacked sixth-placed Eastern Suburbs 5-1. Nepean are hard on their heels and maintaining the pressure following their 2-0 win over third-placed Macarthur Rams. Manly Warringah Dolphins had a healthy 2-0 victory over Mingara Lakers to remain in fourth spot while Blacktown Association beat St George 3-0 and they are still in fifth-position as a result. Hills United were held to a 0-0 draw by Camden Tigers and Fairfield Bulls polished off Hajduk Wanderers 2-0. Northern Tigers shaded Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1-0.

Grade 14. Nepean have a whopping seventeen point lead in this competition after they took care of Macarthur Rams 2-0 who have dropped out of the top five. Second-placed Northern Tigers lost some ground when they were held to a 1-1 draw by the Ian Lloyd-coached Bonnyrigg White Eagles. Eastern Suburbs dropped back to fifth after their 2-1 loss to AC United, who flew up the standings to third spot. Manly Warringah Dolphins moved two places upward to fourth after they accounted for Mingara Lakers 3-0. Hajduk Wanderers and Fairfield Bulls fought out a 2-2 draw while Camden Tigers defeated the yet-to-win Hills United 3-0. Blacktown Association and St George staged a 1-1 draw.

Grade 15. Bill Garriock's Macarthur Rams have a two-point lead despite their shock 1-0 loss to seventh-placed Nepean. Eastern Suburbs missed the opportunity to narrow the gap and slipped back to third when they drew 1-1 with AC United who have retained fifth-place on goal difference. Manly Warringah Dolphins jumped into second spot when they knocked off Mingara Lakers 3-0. St George are still fourth after their 1-1 draw with ninth-placed Blacktown Association and Hills United are sitting on the verge of a top five placing after they drew 1-1 with twelfth-placed Camden Tigers. Fairfield Bulls and Hajduk Wanderers fought out a 2-2 draw while Northern Tigers swapped places with Bonnyrigg White Eagles at the foot of the table after the Tigers came from behind to win 2-1.

Grade 17. Leaders Hills United suffered a shock when eighth-placed Camden Tigers knocked them off 2-1. AC United reduced the deficit to two points with a hearty 4-0 win over Eastern Suburbs but Fairfield Bulls slipped up when they were held to a 2-2 draw by neighbouring Hajduk Wanderers. Northern Tigers easily accounted for Bonnyrigg White Eagles, winning 5-0 while Glenn Lockhart's Macarthur Rams had a 4-0 romp against the John Koimanis coached Nepean. St George beat Blacktown Association by the odd goal in a seven goal thriller, while last-placed Mingara Lakers surprisingly rolled Manly Warringah Dolphins 2-1.

Division One Youth League

Mt Pritchard are still the overall leaders after they grabbed twelve points from Granville at picturesque Garside Park. Schofields Scorpions are maintaining the pressure following their eleven point gain at home to Canterbury Bankstown while Ryde City are still in touch despite taking a measly seven points from Rockdale City Suns at the Ilinden Sports Centre. Wollongong United is a bit off the pace despite picking up eleven points at home to Mt Druitt Town and the same applies to Dulwich Hill who earned seven points at home against MSC Liverpool. Stanmore Hawks took nine points home from Parramatta City and rather predictably, Hurstville City Minotaurs shared the points equally with the marginally better-off Hawkesbury City. Parramatta City were in action again on Sunday, securing all the points from Hurstville City Minotaurs.

GOAL WATCH: There were 115 goals scored in this division for an average of 3.28 goals per match.

Grade 12. Schofields Scorpions' one point at the top of the tree continued after they disposed of Canterbury Bankstown 8-0 with the goals coming from a Shane Ardle first half hat-trick and another from Daniel Fogarty before the break. Ardle added his fourth in the second stanza with further goals coming from Trent Milceest, Robert Wenzel and an own goal. Wollongong United maintained the pressure, accounting for Mt Druitt Town 2-0. It is now certain that Schofields and Wollongong will fight it out for the title as they have a substantial break on the rest. Parramatta City are third after they defeated Stanmore Hawks 2-0 and then won on forfeit against Hurstville City on Sunday. They are followed by Granville, who won 3-0 over Mt Pritchard, who themselves lost the chance to grab a place in the top five. Fifth-placed Ryde City was held to a 1-1

draw by Rockdale City Suns. MSC Liverpool defeated Dulwich Hill 2-0 while Hawkesbury City was far too good for Hurstville City Minotaurs, winning 5-0.

Grade 13. Mt Pritchard have taken the lead after they capitalised on Canterbury Bankstown's scoreless draw with Schofields Scorpions by defeating Granville, who have now slipped out of the top five, 2-1. Fourth-placed Ryde City slipped up when they were beaten 2-0 by eleventh-placed Rockdale City Suns. MSC Liverpool took full advantage of the situation when they beat Dulwich Hill 4-0 and grabbed fifth spot. Wollongong United drew 1-1 with Mt Druitt Town while the same scoring applied to the clash between Hawkesbury City and Hurstville City Minotaurs. Stanmore Hawks were a bit too good for Parramatta City with a 2-0 final result but Parramatta bounced back on Sunday to win their R19 catch-up match against Hurstville City 4-3.

Grade 14. Front-runners Schofields Scorpions were held to a scoreless draw in a very evenly-contested game by third-placed Canterbury Bankstown and they have had their lead reduced to goal difference as second-placed Ryde City beat Rockdale City Suns 2-0. Breathing down Canterbury Bankstown's necks on goal difference are Dulwich Hill who defeated MSC Liverpool 2-1 and Mt Pritchard who beat Granville 2-0. Wollongong United are just outside the top five after they accounted for Mt Druitt Town 1-0. Parramatta City had a 6-0 romp when they met Stanmore Hawks on Saturday and then they carried that form into the R19 clash with Hurstville City on Sunday which they won 2-1. Hurstville City Minotaurs had rolled Hawkesbury City 4-1 on Saturday.

Grade 15. Mt Pritchard lead the competition by three points after they recorded a 4-0 result against Granville while second-placed Dulwich Hill had a 4-2 win over MSC Liverpool. Third-placed Ryde City lost a five goal thriller by the odd goal to Rockdale City Suns who have grabbed fifth place. Ryde are now feeling some pressure from Schofields Scorpions who beat Canterbury Bankstown 4-0 thanks to strikes from Peter Scrivo (2), Jacob Dixon and a fine individual effort from Ryan Coneely. Wollongong City were surprisingly held to a 1-1 draw by Mt Druitt Town and they have dropped out of the top five as a result. Stanmore Hawks shaded Parramatta City 2-1. Parramatta backed up on Sunday for a R19 2-1 win over Hurstville City, but Hurstville City Minotaurs were too classy for Hawkesbury City, winning the match 6-1.

Grade 17. The battle at the top of the table continues as Stanmore Hawks and Hawkesbury City fight it out. This week Stanmore squeaked in by the odd goal in a five goal battle-royal against Parramatta City who slipped back to sixth position. Parramatta reclaimed fourth spot on Sunday when they beat Hurstville City 4-1 on Sunday. Hawkesbury had an easy time of it as they beat Hurstville City Minotaurs 4-1 on Saturday. Dulwich Hill suffered a major hiccup when they were held to a 1-1 draw by last-placed MSC Liverpool and they are now five points off the pace in third position. Wollongong United grabbed fourth place when they beat Mt Druitt Town 3-2 and Mt Pritchard have snatched fifth place following their 2-0 win over Granville. Ryde City are seventh on goal difference after they defeated Rockdale City Suns 1-0. Schofields Scorpions returned to the winners circle in style with a 6-1 win over Canterbury Bankstown. Coach Brian "Geezer" Summers was pleased with their efforts and the goals from Louis Freitas (3), a second-half double from substitute David Attard and one from Troy Eddy.

S.S.I. Girls Youth League

There were no surprises in the results this week, with all matches going pretty much as expected. As a result, there was no change at the top of the unofficial Club Championship Table. Olympic Sharks lead the way, followed by North West Sydney Koalas and then Macarthur Rams. Manly Warringah Dolphins remain in fourth place overall.

GOAL WATCH: There were 66 goals scored in this competition this week for an average of just over 3.9 goals per match.

Grade 12. Macarthur Rams have retained their lead after they accounted for Central Coast 3-1 but they will be aware that St George are right on their tail after they beat Granville 7-0. Manly Warringah Dolphins are also within striking distance of the top spot following their 2-0 win over Northern Tigers. Nepean are six points adrift of the lead after they defeated Blacktown by a comfortable 5-0. North West Sydney Koalas are three points further back following a 2-1 victory over Marconi. Olympic Sharks shaded Wollongong Wolves 1-0.

Grade 14. Leaders Olympic Sharks were simply too good for mid-table Wollongong Wolves as they won 4-0. North West Sydney Koalas are not far away though as they beat Marconi 4-1. Those two have a break on Macarthur Rams who knocked off fifth-placed Central Coast 2-1 while Manly Warringah Dolphins posted a 3-0 win over Northern Tigers. Nepean whacked Blacktown 4-1 and St George were too good for Granville, taking the points with a 4-0 win.

Grade 16. Southern Branch had the bye but still have the lead in this competition. Second-placed Blacktown slipped up when they were held to a 1-1 draw by Nepean and North West Sydney Koalas fought out a scoreless draw with Marconi. Manly Warringah Dolphins had a 2-0 win over neighbouring Northern Tigers. While Granville rolled St George 3-2. Macarthur Rams outclassed Central Coast with a 7-0 result. The match between Olympic Sharks and Wollongong Wolves was not played.

attack Boys Metropolitan League

Gladesville Hornsby have continued their unbeaten run but they had a bit of a scare when lowly Canterbury held them to a scoreless draw. That allowed Granville to narrow the gap at the top to two points when they beat Sutherland 1-0. Bankstown is only a point further back following a 1-0 win over fourth-placed Macarthur. Fifth-placed Eastern Suburbs defeated bottom-runners Illawarra 2-1 while Blacktown and Nepean split the points after their 2-2 draw. Central Coast drew 1-1 with Southern Branch, Manly Warringah rolled Ku-Ring-Gai 3-0 and Southern Districts were too good for St George as they posted a 5-3 result.

GOAL WATCH: There were twenty-two goals scored in this competition for an average of 2.75 goals per match.



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PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE - ROUND 21:

GRADE 12: A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 1 Penrith Panthers 0, Parramatta Eagles 1 Marconi Stallions 2, Wollongong Wolves 2 Bankstown City Cubs 1, Newcastle United 1 Olympic Sharks 0, Blacktown City Demons 1 Northern Spirit 0, Sutherland Shire Sharks 0 Southern Branch YL 0, Sydney United 2 Central Coast Coasties 3.

GRADE 13: A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 2 Penrith Panthers 1, Parramatta Eagles 2 Marconi Stallions 2, Wollongong Wolves 3 Bankstown City Cubs 0, Newcastle United 0 Olympic Sharks 4, Blacktown City Demons 3 Northern Spirit 0, Sutherland Shire Sharks 3 Southern Branch YL 1, Sydney United 2 Central Coast Coasties 2.

GRADE 14: A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 2 Penrith Panthers 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Marconi Stallions 0, Wollongong Wolves 2 Bankstown City Cubs 1, Newcastle United 0 Olympic Sharks 1, Blacktown City Demons 1 Northern Spirit 0, Sutherland Shire Sharks 2 Southern Branch YL 3, Sydney United 2 Central Coast Coasties 1.

GRADE 15: A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 1 Penrith Panthers 2, Parramatta Eagles 0 Marconi Stallions 1, Wollongong Wolves 0 Bankstown City Cubs 0, Newcastle United 2 Olympic Sharks 0, Blacktown City Demons 2 Northern Spirit 1, Sydney United 2 Central Coast Coasties 0.

GRADE 16: A.P.I.A.-Leichhardt Tigers 0 Penrith Panthers 2, Parramatta Eagles 2 Marconi Stallions 0, Wollongong Wolves 2 Bankstown City Cubs 0, Newcastle United 2 Olympic Sharks 1, Blacktown City Demons 3 Northern Spirit 1, Sydney United 0 Central Coast Coasties 2.

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 12

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Blacktown City | 20 | 17 | 3 | 0 | 48 | 10 | 38 | 54 |
| Northern Spirit | 20 | 15 | 1 | 4 | 55 | 20 | 35 | 46 |
| W'gong Wolves | 19 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 26 | 12 | 14 | 40 |
| Olympic Sharks | 20 | 12 | 2 | 6 | 38 | 19 | 38 | 20 |
| Newcastle United | 21 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 33 | 30 | 3 | 32 |
| Penrith Panthers | 20 | 10 | 2 | 8 | 26 | 23 | 3 | 32 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 30 | 25 | 5 | 30 |
| Marconi Stallions | 19 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 30 | 28 | 2 | 30 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 20 | 9 | 1 | 10 | 25 | 33 | -8 | 28 |
| Parramatta Eagles | 20 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 24 | 29 | -5 | 24 |
| Sydney United | 19 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 27 | 35 | -8 | 21 |
| Sthn Branch YL | 20 | 3 | 5 | 12 | 12 | 40 | -28 | 14 |
| Sutherland Shire | 20 | 2 | 2 | 16 | 15 | 47 | -32 | 8 |
| Bankstown City | 20 | 0 | 1 | 19 | 6 | 44 | -38 | 1 |

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 13

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Olympic Sharks | 20 | 17 | 2 | 1 | 64 | 8 | 56 | 53 |
| Blacktown City | 20 | 15 | 3 | 2 | 48 | 11 | 37 | 48 |
| Parramatta Eagles | 20 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 41 | 18 | 23 | 43 |
| Northern Spirit | 20 | 14 | 0 | 6 | 59 | 27 | 32 | 42 |
| Sutherland Shire | 20 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 38 | 18 | 20 | 38 |
| W'gong Wolves | 19 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 51 | 19 | 32 | 35 |
| Newcastle United | 21 | 8 | 3 | 10 | 21 | 27 | -6 | 27 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 22 | 33 | -11 | 25 |
| Marconi Stallions | 19 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 33 | 32 | 1 | 23 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 20 | 6 | 0 | 14 | 53 | 39 | -18 | 18 |
| Penrith Panthers | 20 | 3 | 5 | 12 | 24 | 34 | -10 | 14 |
| Sydney United | 19 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 17 | 48 | -31 | 13 |
| Sthn Branch YL | 20 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 15 | 64 | -49 | 10 |
| Bankstown City | 20 | 2 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 62 | -55 | 6 |

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Parramatta Eagles | 19 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 37 | 13 | 24 | 44 |
| Blacktown City | 20 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 32 | 13 | 19 | 42 |
| Marconi Stallions | 19 | 12 | 2 | 5 | 31 | 18 | 13 | 38 |
| W'gong Wolves | 19 | 11 | 4 | 4 | 42 | 27 | 15 | 37 |
| Olympic Sharks | 19 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 23 | 11 | 12 | 33 |
| Sydney United | 19 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 33 | 21 | 12 | 31 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 19 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 22 | 33 | -11 | 25 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 27 | 24 | 3 | 24 |
| Northern Spirit | 20 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 26 | 27 | -1 | 23 |
| Bankstown City | 19 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 19 | 20 | -1 | 22 |
| Newcastle United | 21 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 19 | 31 | -12 | 20 |
| Penrith Panthers | 20 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 20 | 35 | -15 | 16 |
| Sthn Branch YL | 20 | 3 | 3 | 14 | 20 | 57 | -37 | 12 |
| Sutherland Shire | 20 | 2 | 4 | 14 | 15 | 36 | -21 | 10 |

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 15

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Marconi Stallions | 19 | 15 | 2 | 2 | 40 | 15 | 25 | 47 |
| Blacktown City | 20 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 40 | 14 | 26 | 42 |
| Olympic Sharks | 20 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 34 | 18 | 16 | 42 |
| Parramatta Eagles | 20 | 12 | 2 | 6 | 34 | 19 | 15 | 38 |
| Northern Spirit | 20 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 33 | 19 | 14 | 35 |
| Bankstown City | 20 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 28 | 22 | 6 | 30 |
| Sydney United | 19 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 27 | 26 | 1 | 26 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 19 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 26 | 28 | -2 | 24 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 19 | 28 | -9 | 21 |
| W'gong Wolves | 19 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 19 | 28 | -9 | 21 |
| Newcastle United | 21 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 29 | 41 | -12 | 21 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 20 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 29 | 32 | -3 | 20 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 15 | 36 | -21 | 16 |
| Sthn Branch YL | 19 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 22 | 46 | -24 | 16 |
| Penrith Panthers | 20 | 2 | 4 | 14 | 14 | 46 | -32 | 10 |

PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 17

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts | |
|---------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|
| Newcastle United | 21 | 13 | 5 | 3 | 42 | 22 | 20 | 42 |
| W'gong Wolves | 19 | 13 | 3 | 3 | 42 | 22 | 20 | 42 |
| Bankstown City | 20 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 39 | 23 | 16 | 37 |
| Parramatta Eagles | 20 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 34 | 18 | 16 | 35 |
| Olympic Sharks | 20 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 41 | 26 | 15 | 34 |
| Blacktown City | 20 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 33 | 25 | 8 | 31 |
| Sydney United | 19 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 22 | 19 | 3 | 25 |
| Sthn Branch YL | 19 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 28 | 35 | -7 | 25 |
| Marconi Stallions | 18 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 29 | 28 | 1 | 21 |
| Northern Spirit | 20 | 6 | 2 | 12 | 32 | 45 | -13 | 20 |
| A.P.I.A. Leichhardt | 20 | 6 | 1 | 13 | 17 | 49 | -32 | 19 |
| Central Coast | 20 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 23 | 39 | -16 | 17 |
| Sutherland Shire | 18 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 16 | 31 | -15 | 16 |
| Penrith Panthers | 20 | 4 | 2 | 14 | 18 | 38 | -20 | 14 |

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE GRADE 14

| P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|---------------|--------|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| Nepean Assoc. | 20</td | | | | | | |



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Manly-Warringah Honour Lucas Neill with Grandstand

The new grandstand currently being built at Cromer Park will be named The Lucas Neill Stand, in recognition of the achievements of Manly-Warringah Soccer Association's most successful local junior Lucas Neill.

Socceroo star Lucas started his career in the Manly Warringah area with the Wakehurst Soccer Club and through the years, when he was playing representative soccer for New South Wales, always remained loyal to his local association and played all his rep football for Manly Warringah.

QANTAS NATIONAL TALENT IDENTIFICATION CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR WOMEN HELD AT VALENTINE SPORTS PARK SYDNEY:

DAY 1:

UNDER 16: Queensland 2 Country NSW 0, Western Australia 2 Victoria 1, NSW Metro 2 South Australia 1, ACT 4 Northern NSW 1.

UNDER 18: NSW Metro 8 ACT 1, Country NSW 2 Victoria 0, Queensland 5 Northern NSW 1, South Australia 1 Western Australia 0.

DAY 2

UNDER 18: ACT 2 (E Trewhin 1m E Borucinsk 62m) W.A. 1 (L Hirst 4m), Country NSW 2 (S Shephard 55m R Cartwright 60m) S.A. 0, NSW 5 (C Cannuli 15m K Ledbrook 29m penalty E Davison 41m L Blayney 59m own goal 26m) Northern NSW 1 (J Tristram 14m), QLD 4 (T Roma 20m K Castelanelli 32m D Grose 79m V Williams 64m) VIC 0.

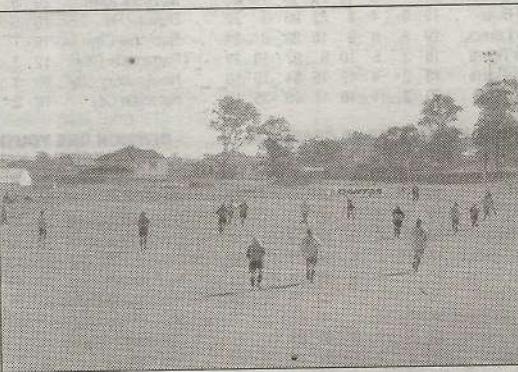
POINTS TABLE: NSW 6, QLD 6, Country NSW 6, ACT 3, S.A. 3, W.A. 0, Victoria 0, Northern NSW 0. **UNDER 16:** ACT 11 (S Close 13/29/50/53/62m M Day 10m T Metherill 12m S Spinapolic 22/27m S Mertens 38m C Rawston 65m) Northern Territory 0, Victoria 4 (C Pfeiffer 40m M Ruyter-Hooley 56m K Nicolaci 61m E Gasson 69m) Tasmania 0, NSW Metropolitan 3 (O Kennedy 20m C Cooper 34m S Uzunlar 61m) Northern NSW 0, QLD 2 (K Jamieson 43/51m W.A. 1 (K Coglan 33m). **POINTS TABLE:** ACT 6, NSW 6, QLD 6, Victoria 3, W.A. 3, Country NSW 0, S.A. 0, Northern NSW 0, Tasmania 0, Northern Territory 0.

DAY 3

WA 1 (G Langley 31m) NNSW 2 (J Tristram 29m/52m) NSW Metro 8 (C Cannuli 7m/31m/33m/52m, K Ledbrook 38m, A Adalis 70m/77m, E Davison 76m) SA 0 Vic 0 ACT 0 NSW Country 2 (K Lawson 59m, C Maciejewski 65m) Qld 3 (K Mowbray 42m, A Reed 54m/68m)

Under 16

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|-----|
| NSW Metro | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2 | 19 | 9 |
| Queensland | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 9 |
| NSW Country | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| ACT | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | -6 | 4 |
| Northern NSW | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 11 | -7 | 3 |
| South Australia | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 10 | -9 | 3 |
| Victoria | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 6 | -6 | 1 |
| Western Aus. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 | -3 | 0 |



Group B

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|------|---|---|---|---|----|----|-----|-----|
| ACT | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 16 | 6 | 9 | 6 |
| NSW | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| SA | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| NNSW | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 3 |
| NT | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 17 | -16 | 0 |

DAY 1

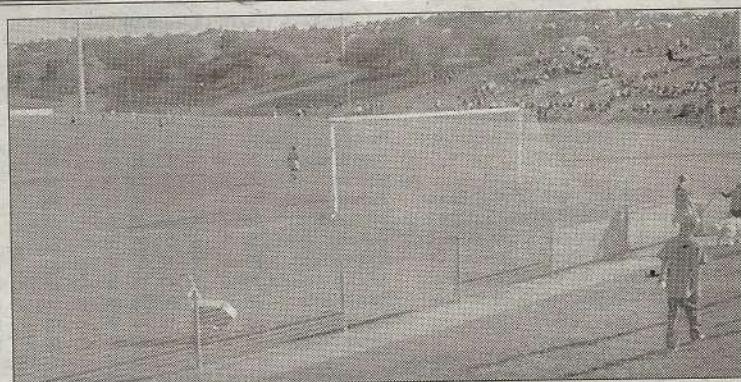
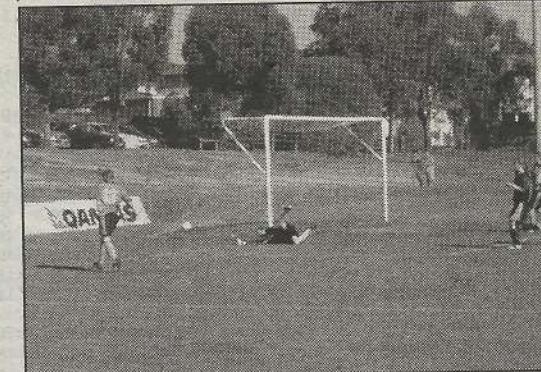
Queensland 2 Country NSW 0, NSW Metro 2 South Australia 1, Western Australia 2 Victoria 1, ACT 4 NNSW 2

DAY 2

ACT 11 (S Close 13/29/50/53/62m, M Day 10m, T Metherill 12m, S Spinapolic 22/27m S Mertens 38m C Rawston 65m) Northern Territory 0, Victoria 4 (C Pfeiffer 40m M Ruyter-Hooley 56m K Nicolaci 61m, E Gasson 69m) Tasmania 0, NSW Metropolitan 3 (O Kennedy 20m, C Cooper 34m, S Uzunlar 61m) Northern NSW 0, QLD 2 (K Jamieson 43/51m W.A. 1 (K Coglan 33m)

DAY 3

WA 0 Tas 0, NNSW 6 (S Schmitz 6m, M Asvestas 10m (pen), J Day 23m, J McLean 48m, K Keegan 50m, T Sneddon 66m), NT 1 (D Baker 29m), NSW Country 1 (T Hayes 5m), Vic 3 (A Sinclair 11m, A Jackson 14m/61m), SA 4 (S Fleetwood 2m, V Balomenos 39m, M Lathouros 55m, D Barbiero 61m), ACT 1 (S Spinapolic 4m)



Before and after: Cromer Park receives its long-awaited new grandstand



WINTER SUPER LEAGUE: DESPERATE GUNNERS SMASH RAMS

With both sides trying desperately to leave the foot of the ladder, the battle of the cellar dwellers, always promised (on paper at least) to be an absorbing and rugged affair.

On the park and in front of a healthy crowd at Magdala Oval, this prediction was fulfilled, as both sides went at each other, determined to eliminate the stigma of the wooden spoon.

In the end, it was the Gunners who triumphed, to the tune of 4-1, a scoreline that included a hat-trick by promising prospect Steven Baveas.

After Ryde took the lead, frustration turned into aggression, forcing referee Spiroski to settle the issue by sending the Rams Adam Wither for an early shower just before half time.

Andrew Borg scored for the ten-man Macarthur in the second half, but it wasn't enough. 4-1 was a fair result, as both coaches, Washington Gonzales, and Ryde's Chris Cowley acknowledged after the final whistle.

State Robertson & Amateur Cup Results

Under 14

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Doonside Hawks | 3 |
| Lilli Pilli Jnr SC | 0 |
| Community Jnr SC | 1 |
| Springwood SC | 0 |

Smithfield RSL 3

Penrith Rovers 0

Over 35's

Penrith Rovers 0

Gymea United 0

Enfield Rovers 1

Engadine Eagles 3

Under 16 Girls

Menai Hawks 1

Eagles United 4

Liverpool City Robins 2

Edensor Park 1

Under 16 Girls

Como West Jannali 1

St Clair United 2

Chipping Norton 2

Menai Hawks 0

Under 18

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Como West Jannali | 9 |
| Baulkham Hills SC | 0 |

St Marys Eaglevale 0

CC Strikers 4

Under 21

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Loftus Rovers | 5 |
| Asquith SC | 0 |

Beacon Hill SC 1

Gymea United 0

All Age

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Bankstown Dist. Sports | 6 |
| Lidcombe Waratahs | 0 |

Marayong Sports 2

Cronulla RSL 1

Liverpool Olympic 2P

Manly Seaside 5P

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SOCER WEARHOUSE

FOÉ DEATH RAISES QUESTIONS

Football remains in shock following last month's death of Cameroon and Olympique Lyonnais midfield player Marc-Vivien Foé during the FIFA Confederations' Cup.

Foé's funeral in the Cameroonian capital Yaounde yesterday was observed by tens of thousands of people. Meanwhile, a second autopsy performed on the player has ruled out the presence of any stimulants and revealed that he died from natural causes related to his heart. However, it still leaves unanswered the question of how a professional athlete renowned for his strength could succumb without warning at the age of 28.

Thankfully, such tragedies remain a rare occurrence. That, allied to the fact that Foé was a prominent and popular player, is why this case has generated so much concern among the football community. Inevitably attention has turned to the demands placed on players and whether they pose a threat to their long-term health.

Foé's death has had a major impact in England. After an earlier spell at West Ham United FC, he spent last season on loan from Lyon at Manchester City FC. Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the English Professional Footballers' Association, has called for a proper summer break to give players the opportunity to recover from long, hard seasons. He has also warned of the dangers of top performers "going to the well too many times".

The suffocating temperatures on the night of Cameroon's ill-fated semi-final, as well as Foé's complaint before the game that he was suffering from stomach trouble, have been discussed. However, such factors would become less prominent should it be confirmed that the player's condition could have taken his life at any age.

Foé's death was similar to that of Nigerian international Samuel Okwaraji, who collapsed near the end of a FIFA World Cup qualifier in 1989 and died from cardiac failure. An autopsy found he had an enlarged heart and blood pressure.

However, the reality is that serious hereditary conditions can remain undetected even during the most rigorous checks undertaken by clubs. Paul Lake, a former City player, now working as a physiotherapist at English third division club Macclesfield Town FC, said: "The worry, the frustration, is that even if the City physios and medical staff had assessed Marc-Vivien's medical in close detail with officials at the club and then done the same with people at the FA, it's entirely probable that something like a hereditary condition would not have been picked up."

"With the number of experts around these days, from the physios to the hands-on doctors to the sports scientists, clubs have just about every avenue covered. I would be amazed to think in this case that it could have been something that would normally have shown up on the medical."



Cameroon players pay tribute to Marc-Vivien Foé, who died at the age of 28.

In Foé's case, attention has turned to the possibility of Sudden Adult Death Syndrome which, in some cases, is believed to have been caused by heart arrhythmias in which the heartbeat races without warning.

Experts say it is not an easy condition to detect,

especially on a routine heart health check of the type normally taken during a footballer's medical. Sufferers may have no symptoms at all, while the fatal arrhythmia may even occur when the victim is asleep.

Source - www.uefa.com

Bergkamp offer 'embarrassing'



Dennis Bergkamp's agent has labelled the Gunners latest contract offer as embarrassing.

pointed with the way Arsenal have behaved."

Bergkamp has decided to remain in Holland until his future is resolved.

Ballack glad he chose Bayern over Real

Germany midfielder Michael Ballack is glad he turned down the offer of a move to Real Madrid last year and joined Bayern Munich instead.

"I could have gone there, but I decided to come to the right club," Ballack, who moved from Bayer Leverkusen, told Sunday's Bild newspaper. "It's more fun to beat these superstars than it is to play with them."

Ballack, who last season helped Bayern make up for their first-round exit in the Champions League with a German league and cup double, said the Bavarian club would not suffer the same fate in Europe this year.

"That's not going to happen again," he said.

"There are some teams at the same level as us. But there are no sides that are better than us."

Hackers blamed for Valderrama shock

Colombian soccer officials blamed computer hackers last Monday after their official website announced that former midfielder Carlos Valderrama had taken over from Francisco Maturana as coach of the national team.

The Colombian Football Federation (FCF) confirmed that Maturana, who led the team to fourth place in last month's Confederations Cup in France, would be in charge at the CONCACAF Gold Cup, starting at the weekend in the United States and Mexico.

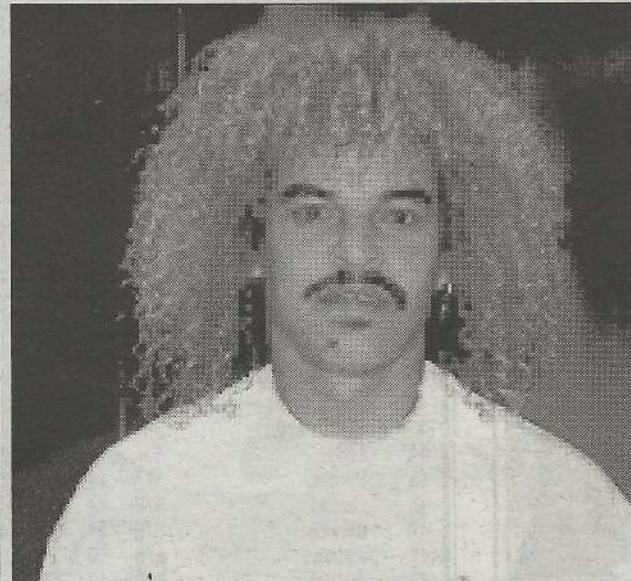
The FCF admitted that its website had included a story announcing Valderrama, who ended his playing career this year at the age

of 41 and has no coaching experience, as Maturana's replacement.

"This information has no validity whatsoever, it's false," said an FCF statement. "It appears that hackers have managed to access our page www.colfutbol.org and change its content in the last few days."

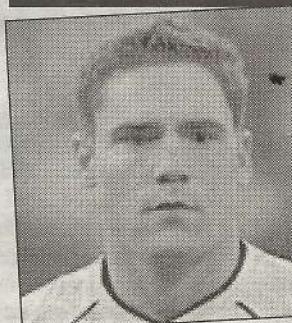
Valderrama, famous for his deft touches, superb ball control and apparently lazy style and easily distinguished by his mop of hair, played for Colombia at the 1990, 1994 and 1998 World Cups.

The twice former South American player of the year is regarded as one of the finest players the country has ever produced and has already indicated an interest in coaching.



Former Colombian star Carlos Valderrama.

Gold delighted with capture of Dunn



David Dunn: Birmingham City's new star.

David Dunn was introduced as a new Birmingham player at a press conference later week with the praises of St Andrews chairman David Gold ringing in his ears.

Dunn quit his hometown club Blackburn Rovers to join Birmingham and even refused to talk to late bidders Middlesbrough as he was already discussing terms with the midlands outfit.

The 23-year-old ended six years as a pro at Ewood Park when he completed his £5.5million move to Birmingham yesterday in order to take up a new challenge under manager Steve Bruce.

City chairman Gold was delighted to have beaten off competition to sign Dunn, having at one stage threatened to pull out of the protracted deal.

He said: "This is a fantastic signing for the club and, following the arrival of Matthew Upson and Christophe Dugarry last season, highlights our ability to attract top players."

"We are all delighted David has joined as he is an outstanding player with a great future."

Dunn progressed through the youth ranks at Ewood Park and signed his first professional contract with Rovers at 17, making his first team debut at 18.

He went onto make 169 appearances and after representing England at youth and under-21 level he was given his full debut by Sven-Goran Eriksson against Portugal last September.

Dunn was convinced to swap Blackburn for Birmingham after Bruce promised to make him a better player, the England midfielder has revealed.

After being publicly criticised by Blackburn manager Graeme Souness, Dunn opted for a new challenge at Birmingham.

"Obviously it's very hard to leave a club that you've supported all your life," said Dunn. "But the reason that I've come to Birmingham is that I think Steve Bruce is one of the best young managers in the country."

"They (Birmingham) are a team on the up. I'm sure that if things carry on in the same direction Birmingham can become a massive club."

"As soon as I spoke to Steve Bruce my mind was made up. He said all the right things to me and I wanted to come here as soon as I spoke to him. He told me he was prepared to spend time with me on the training pitch and improve me and that's something that I want to do."

WORLD

Top 25 Linked Player Moves ~ 1 Month

| No. | Name | From Club | To Club | Fee |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. | Eric Cantona (Fra) | No Club | Manchester United | ? |
| 2. | Patrick Kluivert (Hol) | Barcelona | Arsenal, Manchester Utd | £1.5m |
| 3. | Roy Makaay (Hol) | Deportivo la Coruna | Bayern Munchen | £10.56m |
| 4. | Ronaldinho (Bra) | Paris-SG | Barcelona, Man, United, Real Madrid | £31.33m |
| 5. | Lucio (Bra) | Bayer Leverkusen | AS Roma | £10.31m |
| 6. | Santiago Canizares (Spa) | Valencia | Arsenal | £10m |
| 7. | Wayne Rooney (Eng) | Everton | Chelsea | £30m |
| 8. | Thierry Henry (Fra) | Arsenal | Chelsea | £30m |
| 9. | Ryan Giggs (Wal) | Manchester United | Inter Milan | Swap |
| 10. | Juan Veron (Arg) | Manchester United | Juventus | £14.2m |
| 11. | Michael Owen (Eng) | Liverpool | Real Madrid | £30m |
| 12. | Patrick Vieira (Fra) | Arsenal | Real Madrid | Bosman |
| 13. | Luis Figo (Por) | Real Madrid | Inter Milan | £? |
| 14. | Savio (Bra) | Real Madrid | Atletico Madrid | Bosman |
| 15. | Robert Pires (Fra) | Arsenal | Inter Milan | £? |
| 16. | David Trezeguet (Fra) | Juventus | Valencia | £30m |
| 17. | Mario Jardel (Bra) | Sporting | Middlesbrough | Loan |
| 18. | Alessandro Nesta (Ita) | AC Milan | Chelsea | £35m |
| 19. | Harry Kewell (Aus) | Leeds United | Liverpool | £7m |
| 20. | Juan Pablo Angel (Col) | Aston Villa | Real Betis | Swap |
| 21. | Recep Rustu (Tur) | Fenerbahce | Barcelona | Bosman |
| 22. | Cristian Chivu (Rom) | Ajax Amsterdam | AS Roma | Undisc. |
| 23. | Simon Davies (Wal) | Tottenham Hotspur | Liverpool | £7m |
| 24. | Cristiano Doni (Ita) | Atalanta | Sampdoria | £4.3m |
| 25. | Fredrik Ljungberg (Swe) | Arsenal | Inter Milan | Swap |



Patrick Kluivert: The Dutch star could be on his way to the English Premier League.

SVEN DISMISSES CHELSEA RUMOURS

England soccer boss Sven-Goran Eriksson has scotched rumours that he's interested in becoming the new Chelsea manager though he admits he met new Stamford Bridge owner Roman Abramovich.

But the Swede was adamant that the reason was social, saying: "I can confirm that last week I met with Pini Zahavi and the new owner of Chelsea Football Club – Roman Abramovich."

"The meeting took place at Mr Abramovich's property in London."

"I accept that this meeting may create unfortunate speculation."

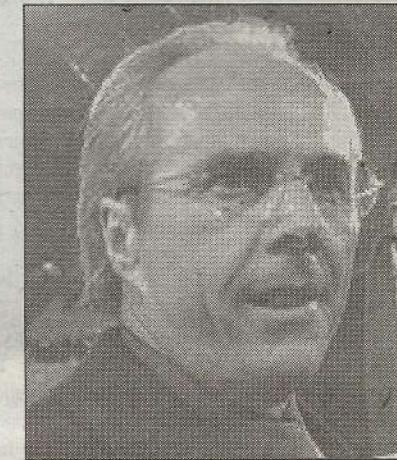
"Therefore, I would like to once again categorically re-affirm my total commitment to my role as England head coach."

He added: "I am thoroughly enjoying the current European Championship qualifying campaign and I am looking forward to leading England to success in the future."

Eriksson revealed that he had been friends with both Abramovich and Zahavi, the Israeli agent who played a key role in the Russian billionaire's Stamford Bridge

takeover, for some time.

Sven om previous season's has been linked to quite a number of clubs in the Premier League, Primera Liga and the Serie A but nothing has eventuated due to his services as England's coach.



Sven-Goran Eriksson: Has refuted claims that he'll be coaching Chelsea.

DAVIDS NOT FOR SALE - JUVE

Duitors of midfielder Edgar Davids have been warned to stop sniffing around the Holland international by his club, Juventus.

The Serie A champions have dismissed suggestions that they might be willing to let the combative midfielder depart the Stadio Delle Alpi this summer.

Even though it might represent the last summer in which Davids would command a transfer fee, as his current contract is due to expire in June 2004, Juventus will fend off all bids for the former Ajax player.

He has been one of a myriad of top players linked with Chelsea since the Stamford Bridge takeover by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

And the prospect of landing one of the world's foremost midfielders at a snip would have tempted many clubs had Juve put him up for sale.

But Juventus general manager Luciano Moggi dismissed suggestions that the back-to-back Italian league winners could look to sell the 30-year-old.

Suggesting Juve would be offering the Dutchman an extension to his current deal, Moggi said: "Davids has never been on the market and never will be."

"The Dutchman is and will remain a Juventus player, in accordance with his wishes and ours."

"All the news created on this subject is therefore lacking in foundation."

Davids has been at Juve since December 1997, in which time the club have won three Serie A titles.

He cuts quite a striking figure because of the protective glasses he has worn during matches since suffering from an acute case of glaucoma three years ago, as for his football.

Davids has been regarded as one of the most hardworking players in world football and known to many as a fierce competitor on the pitch.

His attitude in winning everything and going into any challenge is what has won him a lot of respect from world soccer observers from across the globe.

His infamous 'goggles' that he wears in every match has somewhat transformed it into a massive trend and trademark of the Dutch man.



Edgar Davids has been told by club Juventus that he's not for sale.

FIFA WORLD RANKINGS



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----------------------|-----|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1 | Brazil | 843 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 51 | New Zealand | 557 | 52 | 1 | 49 | -2 |
| 2 | France | 784 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 52 | Trinidad and Tobago | 553 | 51 | -1 | 47 | -5 |
| 3 | Spain | 784 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 53 | Slovakia | 548 | 53 | 0 | 55 | 2 |
| 4 | Germany | 757 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 54 | Hungary | 544 | 58 | 4 | 56 | 2 |
| 5 | Argentina | 753 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 55 | Zimbabwe | 538 | 60 | 5 | 56 | 1 |
| 6 | Netherlands | 746 | 5 | -1 | 6 | 0 | 56 | Cuba | 535 | 55 | -1 | 71 | 15 |
| 7 | England | 739 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 56 | Iraq | 536 | 54 | -2 | 53 | -3 |
| 8 | Turkey | 722 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 58 | Guatemala | 534 | 55 | -3 | 78 | 20 |
| 9 | Mexico | 720 | 9 | 0 | 8 | -1 | 59 | Thailand | 533 | 55 | -4 | 66 | 7 |
| 10 | United States | 715 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 59 | Côte d'Ivoire | 533 | 67 | 8 | 64 | 5 |
| 10 | Denmark | 715 | 11 | 1 | 12 | 2 | 61 | Estonia | 528 | 65 | 4 | | |
| 12 | Italy | 709 | 14 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 61 | Austria | 528 | 61 | 0 | 54 | -7 |
| 13 | Czech Republic | 707 | 13 | 0 | 15 | 2 | 63 | Venezuela | 527 | 65 | 2 | 69 | 6 |
| 14 | Portugal | 706 | 12 | -2 | 11 | -3 | 64 | Scotland | 524 | 59 | -5 | 58 | -6 |
| 15 | Ireland Republic | 704 | 15 | 0 | 14 | -1 | 65 | Congo DR | 520 | 63 | -2 | 65 | 0 |
| 16 | Belgium | 681 | 16 | 0 | 17 | 1 | 66 | Algeria | 517 | 70 | 4 | 68 | 2 |
| 17 | Costa Rica | 671 | 18 | 1 | 21 | 4 | 67 | Ghana | 516 | 64 | -3 | 60 | -7 |
| 18 | Cameroon | 666 | 17 | -1 | 16 | -2 | 68 | China PR | 513 | 62 | -6 | 63 | -5 |
| 19 | Paraguay | 664 | 19 | 0 | 18 | -1 | 69 | Zambia | 512 | 69 | 0 | 66 | -3 |
| 20 | Sweden | 660 | 20 | 0 | 24 | 4 | 70 | Iceland | 509 | 68 | -2 | 58 | -12 |
| 21 | Korea Republic | 656 | 21 | 0 | 20 | -1 | 71 | Qatar | 506 | 71 | 0 | 62 | -9 |
| 22 | Serbia and Montenegro | 650 | 22 | 0 | 19 | -3 | 72 | Bosnia-Herzegovina | 503 | 72 | 0 | 87 | 15 |
| 23 | Japan | 645 | 25 | 2 | 22 | -1 | 73 | Chile | 494 | 80 | 7 | 84 | 11 |
| 24 | Norway | 643 | 23 | -1 | 26 | 2 | 74 | Mali | 493 | 79 | 5 | 73 | -1 |
| 25 | Russia | 641 | 24 | -1 | 22 | -3 | 75 | Jordan | 492 | 73 | -2 | 77 | 2 |
| 26 | Croatia | 640 | 26 | 0 | 32 | 6 | 76 | Belarus | 489 | 75 | -1 | 74 | -2 |
| 27 | Romania | 631 | 28 | 1 | 24 | -3 | 77 | Canada | 488 | 74 | -3 | 70 | -7 |
| 28 | Uruguay | 629 | 27 | -1 | 28 | 0 | 78 | Kenya | 486 | 76 | -2 | 80 | 2 |
| 29 | Poland | 627 | 28 | -1 | 33 | 4 | 79 | Latvia | 483 | 86 | 7 | 78 | -1 |
| 29 | Senegal | 627 | 30 | 1 | 27 | -2 | 80 | Haiti | 482 | 76 | -4 | 71 | -9 |
| 31 | South Africa | 624 | 31 | 0 | 30 | -1 | 81 | Peru | 479 | 78 | -3 | 82 | 1 |
| 32 | Nigeria | 621 | 32 | 0 | 29 | -3 | 82 | El Salvador | 472 | 82 | 0 | 94 | 12 |
| 33 | Ecuador | 620 | 33 | 0 | 31 | -2 | 83 | Burkina Faso | 470 | 81 | -2 | 75 | -8 |
| 34 | Iran | 614 | 34 | 0 | 33 | -1 | 84 | Indonesia | 469 | 84 | 0 | 110 | 26 |
| 35 | Bulgaria | 611 | 38 | 3 | 42 | 7 | 84 | Georgia | 469 | 93 | 9 | 90 | 6 |
| 36 | Slovenia | 610 | 36 | 0 | 36 | 0 | 86 | Angola | 468 | 83 | -3 | 76 | -10 |
| 37 | Honduras | 608 | 40 | 3 | 40 | 3 | 87 | Kuwait | 464 | 84 | -3 | 83 | -4 |
| 38 | Morocco | 604 | 36 | -2 | 35 | -3 | 88 | Cyprus | 463 | 87 | -1 | 80 | -8 |
| 39 | Colombia | 601 | 35 | -4 | 37 | -2 | 89 | Albania | 458 | 88 | -1 | 93 | 4 |
| 40 | Tunisia | 596 | 41 | 1 | 41 | 1 | 90 | United Arab Emirates | 448 | 90 | 0 | 89 | -1 |
| 40 | Israel | 596 | 44 | | | | | | | | | | |

WORLD

FINAL STANDINGS



French Ligue 1

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1. LYON | 38 | 19 | 11 | 8 | 63 | -41 | 68 |
| 2. MONACO | 38 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 66 | -33 | 67 |
| 3. MARSEILLE | 38 | 19 | 8 | 11 | 41 | -36 | 65 |
| 4. BORDEAUX | 38 | 18 | 10 | 10 | 57 | -36 | 64 |
| 5. SOCHAUX | 38 | 17 | 13 | 8 | 46 | -31 | 64 |
| 6. AUXERRE | 38 | 18 | 10 | 10 | 38 | -29 | 64 |
| 7. GUINGAMP | 38 | 19 | 5 | 14 | 59 | -46 | 62 |
| 8. LENS | 38 | 14 | 15 | 9 | 43 | -31 | 57 |
| 9. NANTES | 38 | 16 | 8 | 14 | 37 | -39 | 56 |
| 10. NICE | 38 | 13 | 16 | 9 | 39 | -31 | 55 |
| 11. PSG | 38 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 47 | -36 | 54 |
| 12. BASTIA | 38 | 12 | 11 | 15 | 40 | -48 | 47 |
| 13. STRASBOURG | 38 | 11 | 12 | 15 | 40 | -54 | 45 |
| 14. LILLE | 38 | 10 | 12 | 16 | 29 | -44 | 42 |
| 15. RENNES | 38 | 10 | 10 | 18 | 35 | -45 | 40 |
| 16. MONTPELLIER | 38 | 10 | 10 | 18 | 37 | -54 | 40 |
| 17. AJACCIO | 38 | 9 | 12 | 17 | 29 | -49 | 39 |
| 18. LE HAVRE | 38 | 10 | 8 | 20 | 27 | -47 | 38 |
| 19. SEDAN | 38 | 9 | 9 | 20 | 41 | -59 | 36 |
| 20. TROYES | 38 | 7 | 10 | 21 | 23 | -48 | 31 |



German Bundesliga

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | PTS |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1. B.MUNICH | 34 | 23 | 6 | 5 | 70 | -25 | 75 |
| 2. STUTTGART | 34 | 17 | 8 | 9 | 54 | -39 | 59 |
| 3. DORTMUND | 34 | 15 | 13 | 6 | 51 | -27 | 58 |
| 4. HAMBURGER SV | 34 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 46 | -36 | 56 |
| 5. HERTHA | 34 | 16 | 6 | 12 | 52 | -43 | 54 |
| 6. WERDER BREMEN | 34 | 16 | 4 | 14 | 51 | -50 | 52 |
| 7. SCHALKE | 34 | 12 | 13 | 9 | 46 | -40 | 49 |
| 8. WOLFSBURG | 34 | 13 | 7 | 14 | 39 | -43 | 46 |
| 9. BOCHUM | 34 | 12 | 9 | 13 | 55 | -56 | 45 |
| 10. 1860 MUNICH | 34 | 12 | 9 | 13 | 44 | -52 | 45 |
| 11. HANNOVER | 34 | 12 | 7 | 15 | 47 | -57 | 43 |
| 12. M.GLADBACH | 34 | 11 | 9 | 14 | 43 | -45 | 42 |
| 13. HANSA ROSTOCK | 34 | 11 | 8 | 15 | 35 | -41 | 41 |
| 14. KAISERSLAUTERN | 34 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 40 | -42 | 40 |
| 15. LEVERKUSEN | 34 | 11 | 7 | 16 | 47 | -56 | 40 |
| 16. BIELEFELD | 34 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 35 | -46 | 36 |
| 17. NÜRNBERG | 34 | 8 | 6 | 20 | 33 | -60 | 30 |
| 18. COTTBUS | 34 | 7 | 9 | 18 | 34 | -64 | 30 |



Belgian Eerstklasse

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | PTS |
|-----------------|----|----|---|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1. CLUB BRUGGE | 32 | 25 | 4 | 3 | 96 | -33 | 79 |
| 2. ANDERLECHT | 32 | 23 | 2 | 7 | 72 | -31 | 71 |
| 3. LOKEREN | 32 | 18 | 6 | 8 | 69 | -51 | 60 |
| 4. SINT-TRUIDEN | 32 | 16 | 8 | 8 | 63 | -44 | 56 |
| 5. LIERSE | 32 | 16 | 8 | 8 | 51 | -41 | 56 |
| 6. GENK | 32 | 16 | 7 | 9 | 73 | -52 | 55 |
| 7. STANDARD | 32 | 14 | 8 | 10 | 53 | -39 | 50 |
| 8. AA GENT | 32 | 15 | 2 | 15 | 49 | -55 | 47 |
| 9. MONS | 32 | 13 | 4 | 15 | 45 | -45 | 43 |
| 10. WESTERLO | 32 | 12 | 4 | 16 | 39 | -46 | 40 |
| 11. BEVEREN | 32 | 12 | 2 | 18 | 50 | -69 | 38 |
| 12. ANTWERP | 32 | 9 | 7 | 16 | 44 | -55 | 34 |
| 13. EXCELSIOR M | 32 | 9 | 5 | 18 | 42 | -72 | 32 |
| 14. GBA | 32 | 8 | 7 | 17 | 49 | -57 | 31 |
| 15. LALOUIVIERE | 32 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 34 | -44 | 30 |
| 16. S.CHARLEROI | 32 | 6 | 9 | 17 | 39 | -66 | 27 |
| 17. KV MECHELEN | 32 | 4 | 6 | 22 | 18 | -86 | 18 |



Spain Primera Liga

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | PTS |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| Madrid | 38 | 22 | 12 | 4 | 86 | -42 | 78 |
| Real | 38 | 22 | 10 | 6 | 71 | -45 | 76 |
| Deportivo | 38 | 22 | 6 | 10 | 67 | -47 | 72 |
| Celta | 38 | 17 | 10 | 11 | 45 | -36 | 61 |
| Valencia | 38 | 17 | 9 | 12 | 56 | -35 | 60 |
| Barcelona | 38 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 63 | -47 | 56 |
| Athletic | 38 | 15 | 10 | 13 | 63 | -61 | 55 |
| Betis | 38 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 56 | -53 | 54 |
| Mallorca | 38 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 49 | -56 | 52 |
| Sevilla | 38 | 13 | 11 | 14 | 38 | -39 | 50 |
| Osasuna | 38 | 12 | 11 | 15 | 40 | -48 | 47 |
| Atlético | 38 | 12 | 11 | 15 | 51 | -56 | 47 |
| Málaga | 38 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 44 | -49 | 46 |
| Valladolid | 38 | 12 | 10 | 16 | 37 | -40 | 46 |
| Villarreal | 38 | 11 | 12 | 15 | 44 | -53 | 45 |
| Racing | 38 | 13 | 5 | 20 | 54 | -64 | 44 |
| Espanyol | 38 | 10 | 13 | 15 | 48 | -54 | 43 |
| Recreativo | 38 | 8 | 12 | 18 | 35 | -61 | 36 |
| Alavés | 38 | 8 | 11 | 19 | 38 | -68 | 35 |
| Rayo | 38 | 7 | 11 | 20 | 31 | -62 | 32 |



Greek First Division

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | PTS |
|------------------|----|----|----|--------|----|-----|-----|
| 1. OLYMPIAKOS | 30 | 21 | 7 | 2 | 75 | -21 | 70 |
| 2. PANATHINAIKOS | 30 | 22 | 4 | 4 | 50 | -19 | 70 |
| 3. AEK | 30 | 21 | 5 | 4 | 74 | -29 | 68 |
| 4. PAOK | 30 | 16 | 5 | 9 | 59 | -38 | 53 |
| 5. PANIONIOS | 30 | 15 | 8 | 7 | 35 | -25 | 53 |
| 6. ARIS | 30 | 15 | 6 | 9 | 37 | -34 | 51 |
| 7. IRAKLIS | 30 | 15 | 4 | 11 | 44 | -37 | 49 |
| 8. OFI | 30 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 39 | -34 | 44 |
| 9. XANTHI | 30 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 31 | -33 | 35 |
| 10. AIGALEO | 30 | 7 | 10 | 13 | 28 | -44 | 31 |
| 11. PROODEYTIKI | 30 | 7 | 9 | 14 | 25 | -38 | 30 |
| 12. KALLITHEA | 30 | 6 | 8 | 16 | 29 | -46 | 26 |
| 13. AKRATITOS | 30 | 7 | 5 | 18 | 33 | -62 | 26 |
| 14. GIANNINA | 30 | 6 | 7 | 17 | 25 | -44 | 25 |
| 15. IONIKOS | 30 | 5 | 9 | 16 | 22 | -42 | 24 |
| 16. PANAHAIKI | 30 | 1 | 6 | 23</td | | | |

WORLD

WORLD NEWS & TRANSFER BLUES

**OLYMPIAKOS SIGN
MIDFIELDER
GEORGIADIS**

Greek soccer champions Olympiakos unveiled new signing Greece midfielder Giorgos Georgiadis last Monday.

The former Newcastle United player was out of contract at financially troubled PAOK Salonika and put pen to paper on a two-year deal, according to Piraeus club officials.

Elsewhere, AEK Athens confirmed the purchase of another PAOK big name in striker Yiannakis Okkas, who passed a medical on Monday.

PAOK are struggling to meet a mid-July deadline to clear all their debts. They have released a number of their higher paid players, including midfielder Pantelis Kafes who has already moved to Olympiakos.

**DORTMUND SIGN MAN
CITY'S DANE JENSEN**

Danish international defender Niclas Jensen has signed a three-year deal with Borussia Dortmund, the German first division side said on Tuesday.

Jensen is a fantastic footballer, a man with an extremely strong left foot. He hasn't missed a game for Manchester City in a year and a half and he's a regular for Denmark," said Dortmund's director of sport Michael Zorc.

The former German and European champions are reported to have spent around £860,000 for the 28-year-old.

"We have a problem on the left wing, we're too thinly staffed there," said Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer.

Dortmund also said they had appointed German international Christoph Metzelder as club captain in place of Stefan Reuter.

**GILLESPIE WINGS
WAY TO FOXES
ON A FREE**

Leicester have captured Keith Gillespie after the former Blackburn winger passed a medical and agreed a two-year deal with the Foxes.

The Northern Ireland international was released by Rovers at the end of last season and has joined Micky Adams' Premiership new-boys as a free agent.

Adams is delighted to have wrapped up a deal for the former Manchester United and Newcastle star and said: "He is an experienced Premiership and international player and will fit into the way we want to play this season."

"He plays wide on the right and has pace and skill. And at the age of 28 he still has a lot to offer. I think he will be a valuable addition to our squad."

The Foxes chief has also held discussions with former England striker Ferdinand over a move to The Walkers Stadium.

**TRIPLE BOOST FOR
WOLVES**

Wolves manager Dave Jones unveiled new signing Isaac Okoronkwo - then revealed that veteran stars Paul Ince and Denis Irwin

were close to agreeing new deals at Molineux.

Nigeria international defender Okoronkwo, 25, has moved to Molineux from Ukrainian side Shakhtar Donetsk and should link up with former Arsenal defender Oleg Luzhny, who has agreed a move to Wolves but is awaiting a new work permit.

The duo should also be joined by Ince and Irwin next season after the former Manchester United pair helped the Black Country side end their 19-year exile from the top flight last season by winning promotion via the play-offs.

Jones said: "It was a matter of them deciding whether they could go for another season and they think they can."

"Now it's a matter of the detail of the contracts. We hope to be able to announce something soon."

Okoronkwo has won 20 full caps and has agreed a one-year contract after becoming a free agent.

Okoronkwo revealed: "I've got friends in the international team who have told me all about English football."

"I have played against England in World Cup and Arsenal in the Champions League so I know a little bit about the game in England."



Okoronkwo shows off his new strip.

**SINCLAIR CLOSE TO
BORO MOVE**

Trevor Sinclair is expected to become the first player to quit relegated West Ham when he signs for Middlesbrough.

The Hammers need to reduce their wage bill after dropping into the first division, and Sinclair is keen to remain in the Premiership in a bid to keep alive his England career.

Boro boss Steve McLaren wants to strengthen his midfield and is an admirer of 30-year-old Sinclair, who is set to move for a fee in the region of £2million.

McClaren and Sinclair worked together on England duty and during the World Cup last summer, and forged a good relationship, which is one of the keys to the deal.

McClaren wants the winger as a replacement for Real Madrid star Geremi who he accepts is now certain to stay in Spain following his hugely successful loan spell at the Riverside last year.



Trevor Sinclair to Boro this season?

**MERSON IN TALKS
WITH SADDLERS**

Portsmouth midfielder Paul Merson is in talks with Walsall over a move to the Bescot Stadium after admitting he is unhappy that Pompey's summer arrivals have been offered more money than him.

The former England international was reported to be in contact with two clubs in the West Midlands but insists the Saddlers are the only English side to approach him.

Merson has 12 months left on his current deal at Fratton Park and is thought to be on less money than Harry Redknapp's summer signings Teddy Sheringham and Patrik Berger.

Merson told the Express & Star: "I've spoken to Walsall and they are the only club I've spoken to. Walsall haven't got any money, so it's up to Portsmouth if they want to do a deal."

"I'm not desperate to get away from Portsmouth, and if they want me I'll be back next season."

FADIGA JOINS INTER

Inter Milan have signed Senegalese international midfielder Khalilou Fadiga from French club Auxerre.

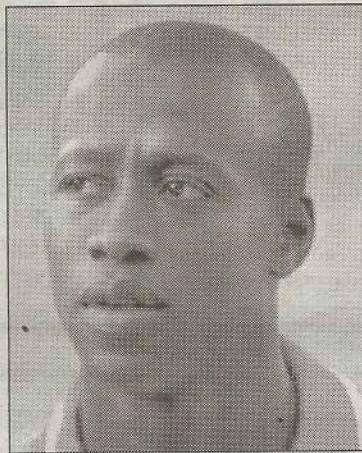
Fadiga, who had an excellent World Cup last year for the African surprise package, has agreed a three-year deal with the Nerazzurri until 2006.



Fadiga joins Inter

The 29-year-old, who has joint Senegalese and Belgian nationality, is the first major transfer coup of the summer for Inter who had to settle for runners-up spot in Serie A behind Juventus and were eliminated in the Champions League semi-finals by city rivals AC Milan.

Fadiga is a left-sided midfielder who likes to attack but also is prepared to work hard in defence.



Khalilou Fadiga: Inter's new midfieler.

Born in Paris, he started out with local club "Enfants de La Goutte d'Or" - literally translated as the "Children of the Golden Drop".

"La Goutte d'Or" is the multiethnic area in Paris near the Sacre Coeur at the foot of Montmartre.

**EVERTON DAVIS BID
REJECTED**

Fulham have rejected a £3.5million bid from Everton for midfieler Sean Davis.

Everton manager David Moyes had been keen to bring the 23-year-old to Goodison Park as part of his drive to recruit young, English talent.

However, Fulham chief executive officer Bruce Langham told the club's official website: "We received a £3.5million offer from Everton which we turned down immediately."

"Our evaluation of the player is at least double that, however even with that valuation Sean Davis is not a player we would want to sell anyway."

"As I have said before, the club wants to hang on to its best players and as such, offers like the one we had yesterday for Sean are unwelcome."

"However, as I said before, if any player makes it clear that he wants to leave the club, that puts us in a very different position."

**CHIVU SEALS ROMA
SWITCH**

Ajax defender Cristian Chivu has finally agreed a five-year contract with Roma.

Chivu, who is moving for a reported 18 million euros, was presented to the press on Wednesday as Roma finally made their first transfer coup after failing to land Nicola Legrottaglie and Lucio.

The Romanian international told journalists: "I am happy to be at Roma even if I am a bit tired."

"This is an important challenge for me, a decisive moment in my career and I am honoured to be able to wear the jersey."

Chivu can play at left-back but also



Chivu - recruited by Roma.

central defence but said he would leave a decision up to Roma coach Fabio Capello as to where he would play.

"I am very versatile and if you are asking me I would say the centre but it is not my decision but Fabio Capello's."

The deal will be a relief to Roma president Franco Sensi who has been much criticised for the club's perceived lack of ambition in the transfer market.

Sensi took a blast at Lucio when he said: "The negotiations went exactly as we expected them to and there was no obstacle in reaching the agreement."

"Chivu is a great player and a trustworthy and open person who I am sure will do well at Roma."

"This deal went ahead in parallel with the Lucio deal but it was the availability and willingness of Chivu to wear this shirt that sped up the transfer."

**VALENCIA AGREE
CLAUDIO LOPEZ DEAL**

Valencia and Lazio have reportedly agreed a deal to take Argentine striker Claudio Lopez back to the Mestalla.

Lopez left the Spanish side for the Italian capital back in the summer of 2000 after helping them reach the Champions League final.

But now it appears he's heading back there, according to Spanish daily Marca.

Their sources say that Valencia's Manuel Llorente and Luca Baraldi of Lazio have come to an agreement.

One issue that had to be ironed out was the 12million Euros that Lazio still owe Valencia for the transfer of Gaizka Mendieta in 2001.

Valencia must now agree personal terms with Lopez before they can confirm his return to the Mestalla.

**PSG CLOSE IN ON
PAULETA**

Prolific Bordeaux striker Pauleta is close to securing a move to Paris St Germain, according to reports in the French press.

PSG chairman Francis Graille confirmed last month that the Portugal striker was a prime target for the Parisians, and now L'Equipe has claimed the transfer of the 8 million euro-rated star is imminent.

Reports suggest Graille has spoken to the player's agent and will now meet the former Deportivo La Coruna forward on Thursday.

Pauleta, who scored a hat-trick against Poland in last summer's World Cup, hit 23 goals as Bordeaux finished the last Ligue 1 season in fourth place.

WORLD

Irish investors increase Man Utd stake

Manchester United's biggest shareholders, Irish racecourse magnates John Paul McManus and John Magnier, have increased their stake in the Premier League champions to 11.4 per cent, the club said on Wednesday.

McManus and Magnier's investment vehicle, The Cubic Expression company, now holds 29.6 million shares in the English Premier League champions.

'Manchester United has today been informed that The Cubic Expression Company has increased its holding in the company and now holds 29,612,396 ordinary shares representing

approximately 11.4 per cent of the issued share capital of the company,' United said in a statement to the London Stock Exchange.



Last week United's shares fell nearly four percent after a newspaper report that the two Irish tycoons, close associates of team manager Alex Ferguson, might sell their stake.

Since then the shares have

risen some 10 per cent on reports of interest from former Football League chairman Keith Harris, and speculation that another Russian billionaire was examining a bid after Roman Abramovich took over rivals Chelsea last week.

A number of high profile investors have bought stakes in United in recent months to spark the takeover talk, including John de Mol, the Dutch media tycoon behind the Big Brother reality television series, and Malcolm Glazier, owner of Super Bowl champions Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

United's shares closed little changed at 160-1/4p on Wednesday.

Since then the shares have

FIFA consider league limits

FIJA have raised the prospect of a revolution in the Premier League by announcing proposals to limit the number of clubs in domestic leagues to 16.

The move was revealed by FIFA president Sepp Blatter at a press briefing in London, and the proposals will be discussed at the world governing body's congress in October with a vote likely next May.

Blatter said that measures needed to be taken to cut the number of matches that players took part in, especially since the death of Marc-Vivien Foe, but that if agreement was reached on a limit there would be a lengthy transitional period.

Blatter said: "The ideal number in a league should be 16, have 30 league matches and then cup matches and international club matches on top."

"I will bring this up in the congress in Doha where it can be discussed and then

it shall be decided at the ordinary congress in May next year in Paris."

The Premier League chairmen will be horrified by the prospect of a reduction - the majority have always fiercely resisted such a move but Blatter said if the decision is ratified by congress then they will have no option but to accept it.



Blatter added: "If such a decision is taken by the congress I am sure everyone will abide by it, but it will not happen immediately, there needs to be time to adapt and it will take place step by step."

"We must do something otherwise we will never get off this carousel of too much football with no holidays for the players, injuries and even deaths. The quality of football will suffer if there continues to be too much."

Even if congress believes the reduction to 16 teams is too drastic, the Premier League may be forced to accept a compromise cut to perhaps 18 from the current 20.

A Football Association spokesman said: "Clearly this is hypothetical and is not an issue of discussion at this time. However as a national association the English FA would always endeavour to abide by FIFA rules."

Blatter rejected suggestions that the Premier League would try to block the move through the domestic courts, saying the only place they would be permitted to challenge the ruling would be the Court for Arbitration in Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland.

French duo receive OBE's

French soccer coaches Arsene Wenger and Gerard Houllier were presented with their honorary Order of the British Empire awards.

Wenger, coach of Arsenal, and Liverpool boss Houllier, were awarded the honours in recognition of their services to soccer as well as to Anglo-French relations.

British foreign secretary Jack Straw presided at the ceremony and described both men as "remarkable ambassadors".

Wenger has led Arsenal to two English Premiership-FA Cup doubles in 1998 and 2002 while Houllier took the Merseysiders to a UEFA Cup, FA Cup and League Cup treble in 2001.

"I am very proud and happy," said Houllier.

"As a foreign coach I understand the significance of being recognised for the contribution to English football," Wenger said he is excited by the honour.

"I am very grateful not only for the

honour but also to England, because you have created this sport, and what would I have done without it?"

"I am happy to share this day with you (Houllier) because in some way we started together, and we have excellent teams together."

"I would like to take this as a symbol of how much sport can do for our understanding of people from different countries." Straw said that the two coaches have played a vital role in sporting links between the two countries.

"Gerard and Arsene are much more than managers who have brilliantly succeeded at the head of two of the most beautiful football teams in Europe, they are in fact remarkable ambassadors for their country, France," he said.

"I know that the French and the British do not always agree, and there are many reasons for that, but I think that it is because we have so much history in common and because our destinies are so entwined."

KAHN BACK

Bayern Munich captain Oliver Kahn temporarily went deaf in his left ear and had to visit hospital to have fluids drained but the goalkeeper he was confident the problem had now been cleared up.

"I hope it's alright now," he said as he recuperated on the sidelines of his club's training camp in Leipzig. Kahn said he wasn't going to let the ear problem, or his private life, get in the way of his football this season.

Kahn, who is also Germany's captain, has endured a turbulent year in which he made headlines for admitting having an affair with a barmaid while his wife was pregnant.

"Sport is the focus of my life," said the 34-year-old. "I did some things last year that were completely normal. But I underestimated the media attention my private life would attract. Naturally, I made mistakes."

Kahn said he fell into a bit of a hole after the 2002 World Cup, when Germany lost 2-0 to Brazil in the final after he spilled a shot that enabled Ronaldo to score the first of his two goals, and got off to a sluggish start last season.

"I know I can contribute to our (Bayern's) success. I feel a great desire again. I'm going to go full speed from the start of this season."

Fan trapped by own camera

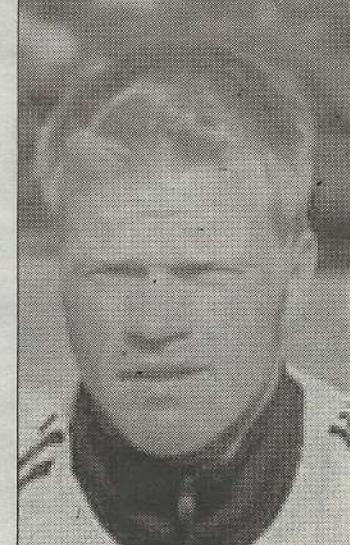
A fan who hurled a camera onto the pitch, narrowly missing Ronaldinho's head during Brazil's Confederations Cup tie with Turkey last month, has been identified after the roll of film was developed by police.

The camera, which only avoided the World Cup winner by a matter of centimetres, was thrown from the stands after Adriano had put Brazil ahead in the match at the Geoffrey-Guichard stadium here.

After local police recovered the missile and developed the film they found a clear image of its owner, a 21-year-old French-based Turkish supporter.

A photograph showed him posing in front of the Turkish flag, with his car's number plate clearly visible behind.

Police went to pay a call on the petrol station attendant at his home in Mulhouse last week, a visit that resulted in his receiving a summons to appear in court on October 29.



German custodian Oliver Kahn.

SALAS TARGETED

The agent of Juventus striker Marcelo Salas insists the Chilean wants to stay with the club. Salas has been linked with Tottenham, Barcelona and Chelsea since the end of the season.

Juve are keen to offload the striker to open up a non-EU place in their squad. But Gustavo Hidalgo told Calciomercato.com: "Marcelo has every intention of remaining with Juventus next season."

"We are confident he will stay with the club."



'El Matador' will stay at Juventus this season.

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